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Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first, second and annual sessions of 2004

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

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Part one
First regular session of 2004

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 23 and 26 January 2004

I. Organization of the session

A. Election of officers

1. The Executive Board elected as President H.E. Mr. Lebohang K. Moleko (Lesotho) and as Vice-Presidents Mr. Mehdi Mirafzal (Islamic Republic of Iran), H.E. Mr. Vsevolod Grigore (Republic of Moldova), H.E. Mr. Eduardo J. Sevilla Somoza (Nicaragua) and Ms. Diana Rivington (Canada).

B. Opening statements

2. The Executive Director said that the international community's preoccupation with the issues of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the highly volatile situation in Iraq, had diverted attention from the spectrum of threats to the survival, protection and full development of hundreds of millions of children and their families. She urged the Board to focus on the achievement of the targets for 2004 and 2005 set forth in the Millennium Declaration, especially the goals for gender parity in education, child survival and maternal mortality, fighting HIV/AIDS, enhancing immunization and improved emergency response.

3. The President said that during the coming year, the Board should focus on how the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) could contribute to the Millennium Development Goals. He added that fighting HIV/AIDS was a prerequisite for attaining all of those goals, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly in southern Africa.

4. The outgoing President, H.E. Jenö Staehelin (Switzerland), reflected on the successful work of the Board during 2003, especially in the complex areas of the UNICEF recovery policy and the allocation of regular resources. He suggested the Board could improve its working methods in a number of ways, and expressed particular appreciation to the National Committees for UNICEF because of their important work in terms of advocacy and fund-raising.

C. Adoption of the agenda

5. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2004/2) for the session.

6. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 54 observer delegations, 3 United Nations bodies, 1 intergovernmental organization, 7 National Committees for UNICEF and the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council

7. The Executive Board had before it the annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (E/2004/3-E/ICEF/2004/4), which was introduced by the Director, United Nations Affairs and External Relations.

8. He also briefed the Board on activities that have taken place since the finalization of the report. For example, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and its members were sending out to country representatives a revised guidance note on joint programming, which would take into account experiences and lessons learned to date, the "second wave" reform agenda of the Secretary-General and comments made by delegations at their respective Executive Boards sessions. The note would provide guidance for the rationalization of joint programming practices to allow for an improved joint response based on agreed goals and outcomes, reduce transaction costs for Governments and propose project and fund management mechanisms for joint projects. The guidance note would help to maximize the effectiveness of United Nations country teams and respond to other concerns raised by delegations to the Executive Boards, Economic and Social Council and General Assembly. Another important step in the implementation of both General Assembly resolution 56/201 of 21 December 2001 on the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) and the Secretary-General's second wave reforms would be the finalization of work on the simplification and harmonization of resource transfer modalities, scheduled for roll-out during 2004.

9. Recently completed consultations with representatives of the five United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) roll-out countries for 2003 (Benin, Ecuador, Kenya, Niger and Pakistan), which were the first to have introduced the full range of harmonized tools and programme procedures, would help to provide more effective guidance to country teams, he said. In addition, an improved system of information sharing and collaboration had been established to ensure collaboration between the work of the UNDG agencies and the Millennium Project and Millennium Campaign, particularly at country level. Ensuring close collaboration for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals was an ongoing agenda item for the UNDG and the Chief Executives Board (CEB) and its subsidiaries, for example the next meeting of the High-level Committee on Programmes.

10. Concluding, he said that UNICEF was at work preparing for the TCPR report and related discussions of the upcoming Economic and Social Council and General Assembly sessions. UNICEF and the other UNDG agencies were working closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on preparations for the TCPR, including ensuring that there were high-quality evaluations of country-based results on which to base future decisions.

11. In the ensuing discussion, a number of delegations said that the report was of greater importance this year, as it was part of the UNICEF input to the TCPR. They encouraged UNICEF to contribute substantially to its preparation, including through input from the country level. The secretariat noted the importance delegations attached to the TCPR, confirming that UNICEF was participating in all aspects of the review and would keep members apprised of progress. Many speakers also expressed strong support for the active role of UNICEF in the Secretary-General's reform efforts. Some delegations said that UNICEF and other United Nations organizations should be harmonized and operate as a strong entity at country level, with a common country programme, budget and representative or spokesperson, and that too little progress had been made by the United Nations on joint offices, joint programmes and the pooling of resources. Some speakers also expressed the need for agencies to maintain a strong identity and their own mandates. To comments about the United Nations field-level presence, the secretariat said that the reform process - including strengthening of the resident coordinator system, a common framework, common budgeting and planning procedures, and a common view of problems - would allow country teams to respond as a unified system to support implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Speakers

welcomed the strategic support given to capacity-building in programme countries and the enhanced process of country ownership. The secretariat said that future reports will contain more information on gender mainstreaming. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the improved quality of the report, although some said that parts of it still needed to be much more analytical.

12. Speakers said that progress has been made with the new generation of Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and UNDAFs, which had yielded valuable lessons learned. Useful instruments included joint programming at project level and pooled funding arrangements. Others said, however, that the CCA and UNDAF processes could be time consuming and should be determined in conformity with national plans prepared by Governments. Addressing a concern over the number of countries harmonized based on "roll-outs" to date, the secretariat said that 80 per cent of country programmes were harmonized, with a majority already having "first generation" UNDAFs. The current roll-out involved "second generation" UNDAFs, which were the basis of new country programmes being introduced in accordance with programme cycles. Delegations also welcomed the strengthening of the resident coordinator system, but said that the UNDG must find solutions to the gender imbalance.

13. To comments about inconsistencies in the UNDAF results matrices between the funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, the secretariat said that UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) were bound by resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, while the specialized agencies had their own governance structures.

14. Most delegations stressed the need for core funding, as it ensured the global presence of the United Nations and allowed organizations to respond quickly to new and emerging needs. Donors were encouraged to improve the stability and predictably of their overall funding, preferably through contributions to regular resources or to give thematic funding in line with the strategic priorities of UNICEF. Speakers expressed support for the annual pledging event in the context of the multi-year funding framework, with one suggesting that during the upcoming TCPR discussions it should be considered as a replacement for the United Nations Pledging Conference. There was wide support for UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank and suggestions that it be expanded to the other Bretton Woods Institutions. It was also suggested that in future reports, work on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) need not be in the section on cooperation with the World Bank. The secretariat replied that future reports would contain more detailed information on collaboration with the international financial institutions. A delegation also said that in resolution 58/230 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly had invited the institutional stakeholders of the International Conference on Financing for Development, including the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes, to include in their agendas relevant items on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in accordance with paragraph 70 of the Consensus. To that end, the speaker said, the Board should take necessary measures to do so and discuss relevant aspects of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

15. Responding to an intervention concerning child survival, the Executive Director stated that child survival and development remained a high priority for UNICEF, as underscored by the World Summit for Children, the Special Session on Children and the MTSP. In recent meetings with partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, it was agreed that there should be a strengthened child survival partnership. The partnership's structure was being designed with assistance from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and in March 2004 UNICEF

would host a meeting to further discuss the arrangements, which would be launched publicly later in the year. (See annex, decision 2004/3, for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

16. The Board also had before it a note by the secretariat on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of interest to UNICEF (E/ICEF/2004/5). Delegations expressed satisfaction with the report. One speaker referred to the JIU report on multilingualism and urged UNICEF to continue to make every effort to ensure that documents appeared on time in all official languages, both in print and on appropriate websites. The Executive Board took note of the report.

B. Approval of revised country programme documents

17. The President said that in accordance with decision 2002/4, the Board had commented on the draft country programme documents (CPDs) and approved the aggregate indicative budgets for 13 country programmes at the annual session of 2003 (see decision 2003/6). The draft CPDs had been revised, taking into account, as appropriate, comments made by delegations during that session and a summary results matrix had been added. The revised CPDs had been posted on the UNICEF website by 1 November 2003. Decision 2002/4 also stated that the revised CPDs were to be approved by the Executive Board at the first regular session of 2004 on a no objection basis, unless five members informed the secretariat in writing, by 12 December 2003, of their wish to bring any country programme before the Board. Because no such comments had been received, the revised CPDs for Angola, Benin, Congo, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Kenya, Madagascar, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the programmes for Palestinian children and women were approved.

18. The delegations of Kenya, Niger, Pakistan and Sierra Leone expressed appreciation for the support of UNICEF and said that the UNICEF programmes in their respective countries were in line with national development priorities. The representative of Somalia stressed the importance of promoting a culture of peace in his country and urged UNICEF to support projects that would encourage young people to turn in their weapons in exchange for the chance to go to school. He also said that the term "lands", as used in the CPD, was incorrect, as it did not reflect the territorial integrity of Somalia.

19. A delegation requested that the next round of CPDs, to be presented to the Executive Board at the annual session in June, include the UNDAF results matrix, and that the secretariat provide a table indicating the countries where UNICEF had programmes of cooperation and what stage of the harmonization process they were in. Another delegation suggested that in future, the revised CPDs include a preliminary paragraph explaining the revisions that had been made to each document. A delegation expressed concern about the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and stressed that food and other assistance must reach the intended recipients. The representative of that country said that his Government gave priority to the health and well-being of children.

C. Child trafficking: oral report

20. The oral presentation was made by the Chief of Child Protection and the Regional Directors for West and Central Africa and East Asia and the Pacific. The presentation, preceded by a short film on the subject, highlighted the massive, often concealed problem involving some 1.2 million children a year - the most vulnerable being girls - and netting $12 billion yearly for perpetrators. Mostly from poor families, children are trafficked for a variety of purposes, including sexual

exploitation, cheap labour, adoption and marriage. The presentations emphasized simultaneous action needed on a number of fronts to support a protective environment for children: breaking the silence surrounding the issue; strong laws and penalties for offenders; the high involvement of children and communities in prevention, reintegration and care; and cooperative regional and international arrangements. These actions, it was noted, can be enhanced by the CCAs and UNDAFs.

21. Many delegations expressed their commitment to taking action to combat this global crime. Several said that UNICEF, with its extended field presence and credibility with Governments, could and should play a key role in the design and coordination of activities and advocacy. Speakers highlighted various actions that needed greater attention: cooperation among partners and between countries; punishment of offenders; improved prevention and care of those trafficked through better data collection, monitoring, community empowerment and the participation of young people; special attention given to vulnerable groups such as orphans; specific interventions such as birth registration, education and provision of access to other social services; strong laws; and innovative approaches, such as criminalizing sex tourism. Several delegates asked for more details on the work of UNICEF in child trafficking, including monitoring and education activities.

22. In their responses, the panellists described the increasing efforts of UNICEF to forge and strengthen partnerships, including those with the tourism industry, to improve prevention, data collection and monitoring. Also mentioned were new efforts by UNICEF to expand birth registration, to address power relations between men and women and to improve the life skills of young people.

D. Update on the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) Working Group on Transition Issues: oral report

23. The Executive Director presented the oral update on the Working Group, linking it to UNICEF work on child soldiers. She said that the report of the Working Group was still a work in progress but a set of clear recommendations had emerged and had been submitted to the Secretary-General. The report would also be discussed by a high-level meeting of the three Executive Committees – UNDG, ECHA and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security. Her presentation highlighted the key elements of the report and how its findings and recommendations might relate directly to the work of UNICEF, although it was important to recognize that the report was not primarily about or for UNICEF.

24. She said that the Working Group had done its work on the basis of many existing reports and was grounded in field reality. The experiences of a representative range of eight countries had been studied and analyzed in detail, focusing on two major areas: (a) factors influencing government ownership of efforts in the transition from conflict to reconstruction and development and the role of United Nations leadership in this continuum; and (b) how United Nations country teams were using and adapting existing tools and instruments in order to provide appropriate responses and effective support. She also highlighted the vital importance of ensuring effective linkages and coordination between the political and humanitarian/development missions of the Organization. One of the report's most significant recommendations was that there is no need to establish new coordination mechanisms to deal with transition situations; existing structures and tools, if appropriately adapted, were sufficient to enable the United Nations to help countries move from humanitarian assistance to post-conflict to development. However, more needed to be done to

ensure that in such situations the Organization's response was more effective in the two substantive areas of gender and HIV/AIDS.

25. The Deputy Director, Programme Division, added that UNICEF had used existing funding mechanisms for countries emerging from conflict, but as noted in the report, adequate, sustained but flexible support from donors for transition situations was often constrained by institutional and policy divides within Governments. UNICEF had always tried to meet the Core Corporate Commitments which were at the centre of its humanitarian response, but child protection assumed special significance in transition situations, although it did not always receive the attention it demanded. In addition to direct support for specific activities, UNICEF increasingly played a broader role in some countries through needs assessment activities, discussion of larger priorities and ensuring that children were on the agenda. Another lesson with implications for UNICEF was that protecting children's rights was critical in all situations but assumed special importance in post-conflict situations, which also provided opportunities for capacity-building. Addressing needs of children was a prerequisite for ensuring stability and normalization. UNICEF generally tried to scale up activities in a post-conflict situation in the areas of: (a) "back to school" initiatives to help re-establish normalcy; (b) demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers; (c) special measures for child protection; and (d) addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS.

26. Delegations acknowledged the excellent work done by the Working Group and the leadership of UNICEF in the process. Several speakers highlighted the critical importance of the issues reviewed and appreciated the work of UNICEF in post-conflict situations in many countries, including efforts for child soldiers. Others hoped that the report's recommendations would be pragmatic and practical. Several delegations highlighted the role of donors in ensuring the implementation of the recommendations because of the persistent funding gap between the humanitarian and development stages. One delegation said that it had established a separate budget line for transition situations so as to be able to respond more flexibly and help close the gap. A number of other delegations also highlighted efforts to provide more flexible approaches to funding.

27. A number of delegations said that the United Nations still needed to improve coordination in transition situations. Strong coordination in the field would enable the pooling of resources to help national authorities effectively, which was as important in post-conflict as it was in humanitarian action or in normal development work. The Deputy Director highlighted the important role of Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in some countries and said that inter-agency task forces like those for Afghanistan and Iraq were now becoming standard practice. The Executive Director added that a crisis in a country could often give more vitality to the interactions among agencies and that the lead role approach often created better integration and coordination.

28. A number of delegations highlighted the good work of UNICEF in terms of education, reintegration and water and sanitation, and emphasized the critical importance of protection issues and of the rights-based approach. One speaker said that protection issues were sometimes difficult to envisage in concrete terms. Another said that pursuing a rights approach must not detract from concrete survival needs of children. The Executive Director replied that while UNICEF was anchored in child rights, child survival was an enduring priority in all situations and a rights approach did not change but in fact helped to strengthen it. Children were often forgotten in humanitarian and transition situations and a rights approach could help to bring them to the forefront. In terms of concrete protection measures, the issue was not that protection was too

theoretical but rather that it did not fit easily into "funding boxes". Its implications were very practical and concrete, for example in dealing with rape as a weapon of war or with landmines.

29. A number of speakers referred to the linkages between political and operational activities and to the need for an integrated approach in humanitarian and transition situations, as highlighted by the report. One speaker said that there were a number of risks in such an approach and funds and programmes should not exceed their mandates or compromise their positions. Neutrality and positions of Governments needed to be respected. The Executive Director said that UNICEF believed passionately in the importance of neutrality in humanitarian work but the issue in transition situations was to ensure that when a political peace mandate was given to the United Nations, the needs of women and children must be on the agenda.

30. The delegation of a country emerging from 15 years of conflict said that UNICEF had played a pivotal role but its work and that of others had been impeded and asked why more had not been done through such channels as the Economic and Social Council during those years. Noting that in her country 70 per cent of the combatants had been children, the delegate also asked if UNICEF had learned any lessons during this period and whether anything had been done during periods when there was a lull in fighting. The Executive Director said that security and access had been real problems during those years and remained a concern. The reintegration of 15,000 child soldiers in that country would not be an easy task.

31. Responding to comments about coordination between the funds and programmes and the World Bank and the work of UNICEF on needs assessment in several countries, the Deputy Director said that UNICEF increasingly was called on to provide substantive technical support to coordinate sectoral work, e.g. education in Afghanistan and Iraq. UNICEF often was asked to lead the water and sanitation sector, although it did not do everything in that sector. One delegation expressed some surprise at the growing involvement of the World Bank in transition situations and wondered how this was perceived by the agencies and whether the increased "grantization" of International Development Association credits would have an impact on collaboration. The Executive Director replied that the World Bank was largely not involved in emergency situations but clearly had a role to play in transition, as did the rest of the United Nations system. The United Nations could not compete if it was only a question of funds but it did have a role in assessment work and in helping to ensure implementation of activities on the ground.

32. Other issues mentioned by delegations included the importance of capacity-building in transition situations, the need for flexible responses, the importance of partnerships with other stakeholders, and the need to continue learning and applying lessons learned. Delegations looked forward to the full dissemination of the report of the Working Group and in following the progress of the implementation plan.

E. Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family: oral report

33. The Director, Programme Division, made an oral presentation on the UNICEF action plan of UNICEF for the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (General Assembly resolution 57/164 of 16 January 2003). He said that the best environment for raising children was within a strong, loving, supportive family, enhanced by progress in gender equality, responsible roles of men in families, shared parenting and support for the rights of children and women. UNICEF supported the strengthening of families in several ways, especially through cooperation

with partners and instruments such as the CCA and UNDAF. In the past 10 years, UNICEF had emphasized support for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, developing a strategy for supporting children's survival, growth and development; preventing family separation, including during emergencies; and addressing the challenges of HIV/AIDS. In 2004, for example, UNICEF would contribute to United Nations and regional conferences relating to family issues; continue supporting programmes to reduce child mortality; help to increase school attendance, especially for girls, through programmes empowering families to provide the best care; support families affected by HIV/AIDS; and undertake research with other United Nations agencies on the effects of family and other violence on children.

34. Delegations expressed appreciation for the work of UNICEF in this area. While several speakers said that the family takes many forms, all speakers emphasized the crucial role of the family in a child's well-being and development and as the first line of defence against poverty, war and other risks and challenges. It was also suggested that greater attention be given to gender equality; to efforts to support the vital participation of men in the family and their expanded participation in promoting their children's health and welfare; and to women's empowerment, especially regarding their ability to make decisions on the number and spacing of children. In this regard, one speaker encouraged UNICEF to strengthen research on the linkage between poverty and family planning.

35. Speakers also said that special efforts should be made to support families - and extended families - that were grappling with crises or who were caring for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Providing those and other families with access to social services was crucial. Several African delegations said that there should be broader discussion of how to assist families coping with HIV/AIDS, especially those headed by grandparents and children, who, for example, require greater psychosocial care. The secretariat was also requested to provide regular information on efforts to support the family. The Director said that UNICEF was working with many partners, including indigenous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to address the needs and rights of children. Regarding HIV/AIDS, among other interventions, UNICEF was finding ways to better support families to promote healthy behaviours in children early in life. UNICEF supported the family through all aspects of the MTSP, and strengthening families improved efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. It was crucial to ensure that family issues were at the core of CCAs and national development priorities.

36. The Executive Director added that UNICEF supported families in a number of ways, and that the MTSP priority of early childhood grew out of a longstanding recognition of the importance of the family and the critical early years of life. Responding to suggestions that youth participation be given high priority, she said that UNICEF supported strengthening the participation and skills of young people, especially in response to such growing challenges as child-headed households.

F. Implementation of the UNICEF monitoring and evaluation plan: oral report

37. The Chief of Strategic Planning and Programme Guidance outlined the UNICEF approach to results-based management, which included the key elements of strategic planning, performance measurement and performance management at all levels of the organization. Results for children were achieved and sustained through programmes of cooperation that were aligned with the Millennium Development Goals, that built national capacities and that were well managed and supported by efficient operations and mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and oversight.

Expected results, indicators, reports and management mechanisms were linked in the performance monitoring "architecture" of the MTSP. UNICEF planned to complete the design of standard performance management reports as the last element of this system by the end of 2004, consolidating key indicators from existing systems.

38. The Chief of Evaluation added that evaluations contributed to organizational learning and supported accountability. The evaluation function within UNICEF was decentralized, and in 2004, 200 evaluations were planned by country offices and eight major evaluations were planned by regional offices. Those were in addition to activities planned by the Evaluation Office at headquarters in the areas of inter-agency collaboration, MTSP priorities, guidance development and capacity-building.

39. Several delegations commended the steps taken by UNICEF to strengthen the evaluation function, to use results-based management tools and to focus on both situation and performance monitoring. It was also suggested that planned results for children should be linked to the Millennium Development Goals. Responding to a question of the main challenges for the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system, the secretariat referred to the need to consolidate different existing information systems into one framework that assessed organizational performance and gave senior managers useful information for decision-making. Although the MTSP for the first time provided measurable targets, standards had not been developed uniformly for measuring organizational performance and the effectiveness of strategies. The highly diverse nature and size of programmes of cooperation posed a further challenge to organizational monitoring.

40. To a comment that a recent major evaluation of a multi-country initiative had encountered difficulties in identifying best practices because of inadequate reporting during implementation, the secretariat said that country-level progress reporting had improved gradually in recent years. UNICEF would continue to invest in generating higher-quality reports, including through the use of core indicators. Responding to concerns about how the organization intended to extract lessons from the 200 evaluations planned for 2004 and how they would be disseminated and used to influence policies, the secretariat said that efforts would be made during 2004 to strengthen the overall framework for identifying and disseminating good practices.

41. Several delegations, concerned that evaluation findings often remained under-utilized, asked how UNICEF shared data on children and women, how it disseminated evaluation findings and lessons learned to staff and whether it exchanged experiences and lessons with other organizations. The secretariat replied that UNICEF provided feedback to staff using the Intranet and worked closely with other agencies, including the World Bank, in identifying lessons learned. A global meeting of evaluation staff planned for March would discuss improved methods to identify and disseminate lessons. Asked about the reasons for the postponement of evaluations, the secretariat said that the lack of expected funding has been a significant factor in the delay of certain evaluation activities, although a large volume of evaluation activities had been completed.

42. Asked about the upcoming mid-term review of the MTSP and subsequent adjustments to the plan, and the involvement of member States in the process, the secretariat said that the Bureau would address the issue to ensure a wide participation. To questions about strengthening the evaluation capacity of national partners, the secretariat said that that available training materials could also be used for the capacity development of programme partners. UNICEF also continued to

support the creation and strengthening of national evaluation associations. Overall, evaluative work should always take into account the wider context set by United Nations reform. UNICEF was participating in direct evaluations of CCAs and UNDAFs and was supporting preparations for the upcoming TCPR.

G. Report on the evaluation of WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

43. The Executive Board had before it a note by the secretariat on the evaluation of the Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) (E/ICEF/2004/6) and the report of the evaluation itself (WHO EBPDC10/5), which were introduced by the Director of the Evaluation Office. He said that the purpose of the joint review of the CCH was to assess its relevance, value added and effectiveness in relation to the current context, including the reforms initiated by the Secretary-General and other forms of inter-agency cooperation, and to propose recommendations. The review, conducted by the evaluation units of UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO, recommended that the CCH be discontinued in the light of other recent forms of coordination. (See annex, decision 2004/1, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

H. Private Sector Division: work plan and proposed budget for 2004

44. The Executive Board had before it the PSD work plan and proposed budget for 2004 (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1), which was introduced by the Director of PSD.

45. Delegations commended PSD and the National Committees for the excellent results achieved in 2003. One speaker recommended that UNICEF and PSD present their budgets to the Board at the same session, possibly in December, as opposed to during two separate sessions. The Director responded that this timing was not feasible for PSD, as its annual budget was based on the latest market results and needed the extra month to finalize figures. The Deputy Executive Director, Operations, said that the PSD budget had to be presented annually because of the nature of the Division's business, and the support budget was presented on a biennial basis. However, at the annual session in June, the Board would consider changing the timing of the biennial budget presentation. Depending on what date was chosen, the two budgets possibly could be presented simultaneously every second year.

46. Several delegations requested a clearer presentation in future of several items in the document, including the costs of fund-raising. Speakers endorsed and requested further information on the strengthened support for fund-raising initiatives in field offices and countries in transition, which, in addition to raising funds, helped to raise awareness about the work of UNICEF and child-related issues in these countries. Another delegation stressed the significance of sales from the cards and gifts business in the PSD portfolio, which contributed to profits and helped to keep UNICEF in the public eye.

47. A number of delegations expressed support for the Division's private sector fund-raising (PSFR) efforts, which now generated the bulk of income. Some delegations, however, found the 2004 and 2005 objectives for regular resources income overly optimistic. The Director responded that the projections were based on direct input from National Committees. The projections were reliable, given the closer working relationship between the National Committees, the Regional Office for Europe and PSD, as exemplified in the Joint Strategic Planning process; the increased

investment in and focus on implementing proven strategies; and the continued weaker United States dollar. The Director explained the positive impact of the weaker dollar at the revenue line and the negative impact on the bulk of PSD expense categories. One speaker suggested that, for clarity, increased income due to favourable exchange rates could be more clearly identified in the document. Some delegations strongly commended the improved relationship between National Committees and PSD. Another speaker noted the improved reporting capacity and the analysis available of all private sector revenues and expenditures within PSD, which facilitated decision-making.

48. Responding to a question about the apparent diversity in planning time-lines included in the various reports submitted to the Board, e.g., the PSD annual work plan and business plan, and the MTSP and medium-term financial plan, the Director said that there was internal synchronization in terms of the key financial targets of the various plans.

49. See annex, decision 2004/2, for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

I. Working methods of the Executive Board

50. The President and Vice-President of the WFP Executive Board made a presentation on the WFP Governance Project, which had begun in 1999. The WFP Board had examined its relationship with the secretariat and working methods, and had undertaken a series of reforms as a result. These included the development of a new strategic plan and results-based approach to the Executive Board's work, focusing on its functions, procedures, programme of work and structure. Key to the success of the project were informal consultations as a basis for the Board's discussions and the improved quality of documentation and the Board's discussions.

51. The Secretary of the Executive Board reported on the dialogue with other funds and programmes on improving working methods that had been requested in decision 2003/14. Together with the Secretary of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, he had attended a session of the WFP Board to assess what lessons learned from the WFP Governance Project might be relevant to UNICEF. The two Boards were different in many ways. For example, in contrast to the UNICEF Board, the WFP Board had limited participation by observer delegations. The WFP Board had a biennial programme of work, in contrast to the annual programme of UNICEF. The WFP Board used succession planning in electing its Bureau to ensure continuity, and the UNDP/UNFPA Board also had a provision in its rules of procedure allowing Bureau members (except for the President) to serve a two-year term.

52. For its part, he said, the UNICEF Board had improved its working methods gradually in recent years. Frequent informal consultations and regional and bilateral briefings maintained a constant dialogue between the secretariat and delegations. Following the initiative of the former President, Ambassador Staehelin (Switzerland), the Bureau now met monthly during the year and daily during Board sessions. The secretariat was working consistently to improve the timeliness and quality of documentation, although the analytical quality could still be improved. In terms of coordination, the Bureaux of the three funds and programmes had come to an early agreement on the agenda of the joint meeting of the three Boards and on the destination of the joint field visit.

53. Several delegations agreed that the experience of WFP proved that a pragmatic approach led to results, and what UNICEF required was a change of behaviour on the part of delegations, a

pragmatic, step-by-step approach and not a large-scale revision of the Board's rules and procedures. Board members should focus on strategic issues and prepare well for the sessions. Speakers also expressed support for the development of a multi-year agenda to coordinate strategic discussion of the MTSP priorities at every session. It was suggested that documents contain clear options for decision by the Board. A group of delegations said that it was time to move forward on a number of points, specifically the written presentation of documents and the definition of the Board's work programme, although that would not finish the job of improving working methods.

54. Questions were raised about the WFP experience of using rapporteurs for Board sessions, about the status of observers vis-à-vis members of the Executive Board and about the time available for informal consultations. A speaker said that in New York, delegations covered many different meetings simultaneously and did not have as much time as delegations in Rome for lengthy informal consultations. The WFP President said that the rapporteur worked with the secretariat to prepare a draft report summarizing the conclusions of each meeting, which was then presented to the Board at its next session for approval. Several speakers said that they were satisfied with the current system used by UNICEF, under which the secretariat prepared a draft and shared it with members for comment before submitting it for translation.

55. Other delegations said that they did not see any need to reform the Board's working methods, as the Board functioned very well under its current systems and the question of reform might overshadow more substantive programmatic discussions. Speakers thought that it was important to strengthen the participation of UNICEF field staff in the Board's meetings, to give a clearer picture of country programme operations. It was also suggested that the process for introducing draft decisions during sessions be more transparent, that draft decisions be made available in languages in time to allow for discussion, and that the role of the Vice-Presidents be strengthened to ensure adequate coordination and consultation within the regional groups. (See annex, decision 2004/4, for the text of the decision taken by the Executive Board.)

J. Pledging event

56. The Deputy Executive Director, Operations, opened the pledging event by stating that while UNICEF had a clear programme direction to reach the Millennium Development Goals and create a world fit for children, the availability and predictability of regular resources were not sufficient to enable the organization to deliver the results-oriented programme envisaged in the MTSP. However, more Governments were recognizing the importance of core financing for UNICEF activities. In 2003, UNICEF had, for the second consecutive year, achieved an increase in the level of regular resources from Governments, with preliminary total reaching $403 million, an increase of $35 million over 2002. She expressed appreciation for the voluntary contributions made to UNICEF regular resources in 2003 from 35 high-income, 37 middle-income and 18 low-income countries. She made special reference to 28 countries that had increased their contributions, in particular, the 18 countries with increases of 7 per cent or more. She also thanked the programme countries and the National Committees for their support.

57. During the ensuing pledging event, 38 delegations made interventions, 21 from high-income countries, 10 from middle-income countries and 7 from low-income countries. Including the pledges received prior to the pledging event, the secretariat received 55 pledges amounting to $257.3 million. Four countries provided payment schedules and 15 countries gave tentative pledges for future years. Two low-income countries - Azerbaijan and Senegal - pledged for the first time.

K. Other matters

Presentation on iodine deficiency disorders

58. The Chairman of the International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD) made a presentation on the progress and challenges in meeting the global goal of sustainable elimination of iodine deficiency by 2005. He highlighted the damaging effects of iodine deficiency on early childhood development and economic progress, noting that since 1990 the world has seen much improvement, including a doubling of the number of households using iodized salt, the main intervention against IDD. As a result, tens of millions of children are protected from learning disabilities every year. He commended UNICEF for taking the lead in global IDD elimination and urged UNICEF to continue its work, although redoubled efforts were needed to sustain gains made, reach the remaining populations in need of protection and reverse the backsliding witnessed in several countries, with coverage rates declining from as high as 90 per cent to 60 per cent. He referred to the successful international meeting on IDD elimination, held in Beijing in October 2003, and mentioned efforts under way to make IDD an agenda item at the upcoming World Health Assembly and General Assembly session.

59. Several delegations stressed the importance of IDD elimination, urged UNICEF to continue its leadership in this area and asked about steps being taken to counter backsliding and reach the 2005 goal. One speaker said that there was a misconception in his and other countries that iodized salt had been used as a contraceptive, which affected coverage rates. The Deputy Executive Director, Operations, said that both the Global Network for IDD Elimination and UNICEF were closely monitoring the situation through the country and regional offices. The ICCIDD Chairman said that a substantial number of countries would reach the 2005 goal, and the Deputy Executive Director said that UNICEF would push for its achievement. Among the steps needed were the renewal and solidification of alliances at the country level, particularly with the salt industry and consumer groups, and to invest in communication for behavioural change so that people would understand why they were being urged to consume iodized salt.

Presentation on polio eradication

60. The presentation began with a video statement by the Secretary-General calling on world leaders to reaffirm their commitment to eradicate polio and pledging continued United Nations support for this effort. The Representative of the WHO Director-General for Polio Eradication gave a progress report on the global effort to eradiate polio and described the funding needs and strategic plan for 2004-2008. Polio was now endemic in only six countries, with only 677 cases reported in 2003. However, there were serious concerns over the spread of the polio virus to once polio-free countries, and over $20 million had been spent in 2003 on mop-up campaigns in seven countries with importations. Despite the challenges, 2004 offered the best chance ever to ensure a polio-free world so long as there was strong political and community commitment backed with adequate financial support. He commended UNICEF for its exemplary leadership role in advocacy and social mobilization, particularly in India, which had seen remarkable achievements in polio eradication over the past two years.

61. The Director, Programme Division, said that over 250 million children must be vaccinated in 2004 in order to accomplish the goal of eradicating polio. He reasserted the commitment of UNICEF and its partners to stand side-by-side with Governments to meet the challenges ahead.

There had been recent achievements in various countries, thanks to the work of WHO, Rotary International, donors and the many other partners that supported the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. A representative of Rotary International added that Rotary had contributed nearly $600 million to polio eradication since the beginning of the programme in 1988. He reaffirmed Rotary's continued support and appealed for urgent contributions to close the $150 million gap in the funds needed to end polio transmission by 2005.

Presentation by the NGO Committee on UNICEF

62. A representative of the NGO Committee on UNICEF made a presentation on the Committee's roles and achievements in 2003. The Committee had met all five objectives for 2003 outlined in its memorandum of understanding with UNICEF. Among its accomplishments, the Committee had set up reporting systems in nine geographic regions corresponding to those of UNICEF and had introduced a sliding scale for membership dues, which helped more than triple its revenue during the first six months of 2003. Emphasizing the Committee's special relationship with UNICEF and the central roles NGOs play in sustaining programmes and improving children's lives, she stressed that NGOs should not be "displaced" by other civil society organizations and expressed concern that NGOs were not listed among the key partners of the UNICEF Office of Public Partnerships.

63. She highlighted two issues requiring urgent attention: increasing rates of suicide among adolescents globally, and the state-sanctioned repression of gangs in several Central American countries. UNICEF was urged to allocate additional resources to preventing adolescent suicide and also to mainstreaming the issue into its programming. Regarding violence against gangs, UNICEF was encouraged to advocate the repeal of repressive legislation and the adoption of approaches that were humane and respectful of children's rights, and to prevent the export of repressive policies to other countries.

64. One speaker commended the NGO Committee for the important role it played, welcomed the continuing "voice" of the Committee at future Board meetings, and encouraged UNICEF to liaise with the Committee on the two important issues raised, which he said should receive more in-depth discussion within the Board. The representative of the Standing Group of the National Committees for UNICEF welcomed cooperation with the NGO Committee to promote the Convention on the Rights of the Child in industrialized countries and encouraged a continued tripartite relationship among the NGO Committee, the Office of Public Partnerships and the Standing Group.

65. The Deputy Executive Director, Alliances and Resources, lauded the valuable 50-year partnership between UNICEF and the NGO Committee and stated that the primary purpose of the Office of Public Partnerships was to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with NGOs. UNICEF was pursuing strong relationships with NGOs through such channels as the Global Movement for Children and United Nations initiatives. UNICEF would play a useful advocacy role in addressing the two alarming issues highlighted by the NGO Committee, which were priorities for the United Nations as well.

L. Closing of the session

66. The Deputy Executive Director, Operations, said that the session had been highly productive and featured excellent dialogue on a number of issues. The pledging event was very promising and demonstrated broad-based support of UNICEF by industrialized and developing countries.

67. The President commended delegations for their strong participation, especially during discussions on key child rights issues and on improving working methods of the Board. He said that the Board had made good progress in approving 13 country programmes, and he commended those present for a successful pledging event.

III. Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA and WFP

68. This chapter, originally submitted as an addendum to the report of the UNICEF Executive Board on its first regular session of 2004, is a summary of the discussions that took place during the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA and WFP, held on 23 and 26 January 2004. The text was prepared by the secretariats of the funds and programmes and approved by the Presidents of the three Executive Boards.

A. HIV/AIDS: regional initiatives

69. Following preliminary comments by the President of the UNICEF Executive Board, the Executive Director of UNFPA summarized global regional initiatives to fight HIV/AIDS. Next, representatives of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) briefed the joint meeting on efforts to fight the pandemic in eastern and southern Africa, emphasizing links among HIV/AIDS, nutrition and governance.

70. Delegations agreed that HIV/AIDS was a growing threat urgently requiring greater attention, action and funds. Coordinated action and results-monitoring were needed among the United Nations organizations, with the roles of each clearly defined. One speaker suggested that UNAIDS be the main coordinator at country level. Several speakers requested that more information on coordinated United Nations efforts be provided at future joint meetings of the Boards. Delegations also called for stronger linkages among United Nations organizations and other groups.

71. Several delegations voiced concern over the danger of the dispersal of resources due to the wide diversity of donors and programmes. To harness resources effectively, it was suggested that every country implement “three ones”: one national AIDS strategy, one national AIDS commission and one way to monitor and report progress. Greater joint funding was also proposed.

72. The panel acknowledged the danger of resources dispersal, which can be addressed through the “three ones”. As for results, the CCA acted as a joint gauge. The bulk of funds and resources were given to Governments, which should be helped to channel them effectively. On all fronts, more accountability was needed.

73. In response to suggestions that each country's HIV/AIDS strategy should be incorporated into development planning and the PRSP process, the panel said that the PRSP process was a cornerstone of national HIV/AIDS efforts, along with sector-wide approaches and nationally-driven coordinating mechanisms.

74. Many delegations emphasized the interconnection among HIV/AIDS, poverty, food insecurity and governance issues. One delegation asked for a report at a future joint Board meeting on coordinated support for food security, specifically cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The panel replied that attention to interconnected issues was growing; that multi-partner efforts were promoting agriculture through conservation farming and other methods; and that FAO played an important role in nutrition, food security, orphan care and other areas.

75. Delegations said that an effective response to HIV/AIDS also involved taking actions to: build local capacity; empower girls and women; promote the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV; support public health initiatives and increase access to social services; balance prevention, treatment and care; reduce the price of drugs and increase their availability; build a continuum of humanitarian assistance to development; secure more stable and predictable funding; enlist greater support of the private sector; and intensify scaling-up.

76. In closing the discussion, the President of the UNICEF Executive Board requested that presentations and responses at next year's joint meeting of the Boards better reflect coordinated action and mechanisms.

B. Simplification and harmonization

77. The WFP Deputy Executive Director summarized progress in the area of simplification and harmonization on behalf of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP. The 2003 Chairs of the Programme and Management Groups briefed on the Joint Programming Guidance Note and its links to the UNDAF results matrix, followed by the Niger Resident Coordinator, a.i., who described country-level experiences in preparing the results matrix, identifying opportunities for joint programming.

78. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of the simplification and harmonization agenda for stakeholders in development. Fundamentally, it was about doing business more effectively and efficiently. The United Nations' work was part of a broader agenda agreed by the international community in Rome in early 2003, and it would form part of the forthcoming discussions on the TCPR. The meeting agreed that the developments reported in June 2003 and on this occasion demonstrated the importance of the subject in relation to such cross-cutting issues as food security and HIV/AIDS, and its complexity. Simplification and harmonization included such issues as financing modalities, common houses and services, leadership by resident coordinators (RCs) and whether human resources management provided adequate incentives to collaborate.

79. The meeting was impressed by progress, but impatient for further results. It recognized that the questions posed by the work were difficult and in some cases threatening. There was a need to improve contacts with agencies working on humanitarian issues and to

consider the implications for the specialized agencies. The meeting wanted to see imaginative thinking about the broad simplification and harmonization agenda in the near future and to be involved in it, for example through brainstorming sessions.

80. The President of the WFP Executive Board presented an informal paper on the role of the annual joint meeting, responding to governance questions raised at the 2003 joint meeting. Two questions were posed: whether to make the joint meeting a decision-making body, or to continue with the existing mandate and aim to improve its usefulness. There was broad support for the suggestions in the paper for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the joint meeting under its existing mandate. These would be pursued by the Presidents of the three Boards, who would meet after the session to plan the next joint meeting. Opinions varied regarding the more radical option of investing the joint meeting with decision-making authority: some delegations regarded it as a logical step in the evolution of governance; others did not think it would add value to the existing machinery. It was noted that the question was already under review, as paragraph 28 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/3 of 11 July 2003 on the TCPR requested "a report on the assessment of the value-added of the joint meetings of the Executive Boards and their impact on the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council and … recommendations as appropriate". The joint meeting looked forward to an early issues and options paper for informal discussion with the membership, preferably in March 2004.

C. The resident coordinator system

The resident coordinator assessment centre

81. Opening remarks by the President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board preceded an introduction to the assessment centre by the Director of the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO). Two resident coordinators who had undergone the new assessment process described their experiences.

82. Delegations questioned the appropriateness of self-selection for the assessment, particularly in comparing the old and new systems. They wanted candidates for resident representative (RR)/RC positions to be drawn from the widest possible field and queried the adequacy of the applicant pool, noting the need for gender balance, coaching and learning plans. They asked about developing-country representation and the pre-selection and progress measurement systems. They said that special representatives of the Secretary-General working alongside RCs should undergo similar assessment.

83. Speakers asked if the increasing complexity of the roles of the RRs/RCs and security coordinators was consistent with simplification and harmonization, and whether the assessment process drained time and funds from substantive work.

84. The panel clarified that all future candidates would undergo the assessment, focusing on competencies and substance. The process – described by those who had experienced it as unbiased and geographically and gender-balanced – lasted three days. Nominating agencies covered the cost, ensuring nomination of only the ablest candidates.

85. The UNDGO Director described the new procedure for identifying and training candidates at an early stage, adding that the various surveys used in the past facilitated comparison between old and new assessments. She added that the company conducting the assessment employed staff from a wide variety of backgrounds and countries.

Video link with Lesotho country team

86. In a video conference, the Lesotho country team, introduced by the Lesotho RR/RC, explained how the RC system in Lesotho supported the CCA, UNDAF and PRSP processes, and their alignment with the Millennium Development Goals.

87. Speakers agreed that progress made in the RR/RC system was yielding tangible results, although resources destined for Lesotho had dwindled even for HIV/AIDS programmes, making 'scaling up' impossible. Some suggested that work towards a stronger system could be funded by the United Nations as a whole or by individual countries. They emphasized that an RR/RC needed a balance of personal qualities and substantive knowledge. It was stressed that in crisis and post-crisis situations, United Nations organizations must work in coordination, not in competition with each other.

Closing remarks by the UNDP Administrator

88. The Administrator stated that in future, RC/RRs would contribute to the evaluations of country team members, with the support of their regional directors. He noted the need for additional RC/RR candidates with humanitarian backgrounds. He acknowledged delegations' funding suggestions, mentioned the new trust fund for support to the RC system, and indicated that core resources were increasing. The United Nations country presence should be adequate and relevant rather than large and fragmented and the United Nations organizations must work in close, constant collaboration with donor and programme Governments in order to remain relevant.

D. Security

89. Following opening remarks by the President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, the Executive Director of UNICEF, representing UNDP, UNFPA, WFP and UNICEF, briefed delegations on United Nations staff safety and security.

90. Delegations encouraged intensification of efforts at all levels to ensure staff safety and security, including strengthening local support to United Nations missions, ensuring investigations of attacks, and punitive measures against perpetrators of crimes. The role of host Governments in bringing to justice those responsible for attacks/threats was underscored. Delegations inquired if the lack of cooperation from host Governments resulted from lack of capacity or lack of commitment. They asked about measures being undertaken to restore confidence in the United Nations. Delegations were interested in knowing how to ensure cooperation between NGOs and United Nations organizations.

91. Delegations inquired if security costs were covered by the regular budget of the United Nations and if recurring security costs impacted development assistance delivery costs. Noting that security costs should not overburden regular resources, speakers asked what funds were allocated by United Nations funds and programmes for security. Delegations

asked about the criteria used to classify countries as high or low risk and inquired if security measures were different in those countries. One delegation asked about the recommendation concerning United Nations common premises.

92. Delegations underscored that concrete and visible results at the country level could be a source of local security. The need for information gathering and reliable threat analysis were underscored. Some delegations noted with approbation the formation of a committee by the United Nations to investigate the terrorist bombings in Baghdad, and stressed the importance of doing the same whenever United Nations personnel were subjected to similar treatment.

93. In response, the UNICEF Executive Director concurred that the United Nations needed to regain the humanitarian "space" within which a degree of security was ensured because United Nations staff were recognized as neutral and impartial providers of humanitarian support and development assistance. She agreed that cooperation with NGOs was essential. Regarding the budget for security, she noted that in 2002-2003 the budget for the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) was $53 million, with about $12 million of it coming from the regular budget and the remainder from other agencies' budgets. For the 2004-2005 biennium, the budget was $86 million, of which $15 million was from the regular budget. She stated that there were both one-time and recurring costs associated with security. Concerning common premises, she clarified that there was no change in policy, the recommendation being that they be looked at on a case-by-case basis in terms of security requirements.

94. She noted that UNSECOORD had primary responsibility for determining the security phase in a given country. A representative of UNSECOORD added that at the country level, the designated official and his/her team determined the security phase based on a risk/threat analysis. Furthermore, security phases 3, 4 and 5 could be declared only with the approval of the Secretary-General.

Part two
2004 annual session

Held at United Headquarters from 7 to 11 June 2004

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

95. The President of the Executive Board highlighted the importance of reducing maternal mortality and the work being done by UNICEF to promote safe motherhood, improve the nutritional status of children and women, help girls to enrol and remain in school, and prevent early marriage. These efforts were all related to the UNICEF global priorities of girls' education, child protection and fighting HIV/AIDS. He welcomed Mr. Toshiyuki Niwa, recently appointed as Deputy Executive Director, with responsibility for overseeing relations with the Board.

96. The Executive Director said that the global climate of terrorism and counter-terrorism had diverted resources and political will from the vital work of development. She stressed the importance of partnerships and collective action for children, including UNICEF work with other United Nations agencies such as joint programmes with WFP and collaboration on child survival and development with partners including the World Bank, WHO, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

B. Adoption of the agenda

97. The provisional agenda and proposed timetable and organization of work of the session (E/ICEF/2004/8) was introduced by the Secretary of the Executive Board and adopted.

98. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex to the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 56 observer delegations had submitted credentials for the session. In addition, 2 United Nations bodies, 4 specialized agencies and 8 National Committees for UNICEF had also submitted credentials.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report of the Executive Director

99. The Executive Board had before it the annual report of the Executive Director on progress achieved against the UNICEF MTSP (E/ICEF/2004/9), which was introduced by the Executive Director.

100. Speakers expressed appreciation for the report's improved comprehensiveness, readability and analysis. The report provided a candid assessment of both achievements and areas for further improvement, and showed a shift from reporting on activities to reporting on results. One delegation said that the report could be further improved by including a chart of selected programme performance indicators and key results from selected evaluations.

101. Many delegations said that the report highlighted clearly the contributions of UNICEF to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the goals adopted by the General Assembly at its Special Session on Children. One speaker cautioned that global aggregation

of results might obscure major difference in progress in some countries. Responding to queries, the Executive Director said that UNICEF would contribute to the 2005 assessment of progress towards the Millennial Goals by working closely with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the other funds and programmes. UNICEF was participating very actively in the reference group established to review the work of the Millennium Project, and was contributing to the strengthening of national monitoring systems through support to DevInfo.

102. Several speakers stated that UNICEF-assisted interventions should directly support national priorities. For instance, to increase national ownership, a national programme on HIV/AIDS should receive support from development agencies through a unified approach. Local and national capacity-strengthening should remain a main strategy for UNICEF. One delegation said that the MTSP had helped to inform national development priorities and had assisted countries in learning from international experience. Some members said that the upcoming mid-term review of the MTSP would further clarify the linkages between the MTSP, the Millennial Goals, UNDAFs and national priorities. A speaker said that the report presented UNICEF much more coherently as an agency which systematically focused on the building of national capacity and informing policy development, rather than simply filling gaps in those areas.

103. One delegate suggested that a future MTSP should allow for better adaptation to region-specific needs. For instance, environmental health issues posed major risks for children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The secretariat clarified that the MTSP primarily indicated the areas where UNICEF aimed for overall excellence and was available to provide strong country support; however the country programme approach — focusing on support to national priorities — remained fully applicable.

104. Some delegations asked to what extent UNICEF had been able to influence PRSPs to become child-focused, and others said that the poverty orientation of UNICEF work needed to be strengthened overall. The Executive Director referred to the report on the UNICEF experience in joint programming (see paras. 68-81 below), which provided details of its work on some of those issues.

105. One delegate said that UNICEF should aim to better present itself and its work in the context of the United Nations system, the work of the major development banks and global partnerships. The Executive Board should be kept informed about experiences with emerging partnerships and lessons for the future. Several speakers suggested that UNICEF should contribute more to the United Nations reform agenda, especially at the country level. The Executive Director said that partnerships among United Nations agencies at the country level needed to be based on a strong programmatic focus. Examples of high-quality coordination included the relationships with WFP and WHO.

106. Some speakers said that UNICEF had been at the forefront of the introduction of a human-rights-based approach in United Nations cooperation, but that more attention should be paid to gender issues and children in situations of armed conflict. One delegation suggested that human rights principles should influence every aspect of UNICEF programming. Asked for more information on the findings of external assessments of the application of the human-rights-based approach in UNICEF programming, the Executive

Director said that some of the initial findings included: an uneven application among regions; a stronger promotion of participation; a clearer focus on the most vulnerable; more systematic use of the observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the use of girls' education as a good entry point for addressing gender issues; and the need for a stronger overall focus on gender mainstreaming.

107. Some delegates asked how humanitarian action was aligned with the priorities of the MTSP, saying there should be one coherent strategy to deal with both emergency and non-emergency situations. The Executive Director said that the newly revised Core Commitments for Children in emergencies would become a stronger feature in the next plan, to increase the understanding and predictability of UNICEF work. One speaker suggested that the focus on the plan's targets must also be evident in humanitarian action and that UNICEF should use the findings of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children for advocacy purposes. Responding to a comment, the Executive Director said that staff security was taken extremely seriously, including through training and emergency preparedness.

108. Some delegates referred to the increased attention by UNICEF to results-based management. One speaker said that results-based management, collaboration on CCAs/UNDAFs and other harmonization measures contributed to improved results. The results matrices attached to the revised CPDs were useful, but it was suggested that they be attached to the draft CPDs submitted to the Board at the annual session.

109. Several speakers confirmed the ongoing validity of the MTSP organizational priorities for the current plan period (2002-2005) and possibly for the next (2006-2009). One delegation suggested a careful review of the plan's targets, especially those related to early childhood development (ECD), HIV/AIDS and child protection. Their usefulness would increase if they could be more specific and relevant to international development efforts. That would require a shift away from targets focused on policies or plans to quantifiable targets that showed the actual impact of programmes on children and families. Some of the important investments and related progress were not tracked by the current indicators (e.g., for water, sanitation and nutrition). The Executive Director agreed on the need to shift wherever possible to measurements of impact, in addition to indicators of policy change. However, quantifiable targets were not always possible, and some qualitative indicators might still be necessary in the future.

110. Delegates commented positively on the increased financial contributions to UNICEF, which exceeded the targets of the financial plan, but noted that most of the additional funds were other resources for emergency interventions. Several speakers stressed the importance of addressing this imbalance, to ensure the predictability of UNICEF assistance and the organization's capacity to provide strategic assistance in all programme countries. Asked if the limited increase in regular resources income was mainly the result of variations in exchange rates, the secretariat said that while this was an important factor, there had also been real growth. The representative of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF said that the Committees provided an increasing share of funds to UNICEF, including some 40 per cent of regular resources. He stressed the timeliness and quality of reporting on contributions as essential to maintaining the Committees' fund-raising abilities.

111. To suggestions that UNICEF provide stronger support to the least developed countries (LDCs), the Executive Director said that the formula for allocating regular resources, decided by the Board, included a commitment to increasing resources to LDCs. Funding patterns were also determined by the pattern of other resources contributions from donors, and had been to some extent affected in 2003 by the large contributions for Iraq. The ability to allocate more funding to LDCs was also linked to adequate availability of regular resources. Responding to a query about why the 7 per cent set aside was funded from regular resources and not other resources, the Executive Director said that it had been approved by the Board in decision 1997/18 (E/ICEF/1997/12/Rev.1).

112. Comments on girls' education concerned uneven school enrolment rates in different regions and countries, and the slow pace of progress in applying a human rights approach and gender analysis to girls' education in countries with the most severe problems. UNICEF needed to advocate further for inclusion of girls' education as a priority in PRSPs and sector-wide approaches (SWAps). On behalf of the African States, a delegate said that improved education of girls had the potential to be a catalyst in solving many other development challenges. Many countries had adopted that priority in their own national plans, but some still required assistance. Partnerships needed to be strengthened, including with the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The secretariat agreed that more could be done to promote girls' enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative was a major tool, and high-level discussions had taken place with WFP and the World Bank on sharing of responsibilities, as part of the Fast-Track Initiative.

113. Other speakers said that UNICEF support to basic education had been very strong in countries recovering from crisis, including through "back to school" campaigns. A representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization commented on the positive cooperation with UNICEF, for example on the development of policies for ECD in West and Central Africa. A speaker said that lessons were available from the evaluation of the African Girls Education Initiative, particularly in respect of sustainability of the supported interventions, and asked about lessons learned from the "child-friendly" schools initiative. The secretariat responded that UNICEF was working on the costing of the initiative and the identification of its most critical elements. Asked about children with disabilities, the secretariat said that the focus so far had been on prevention of disabilities, but UNICEF also supported the integration of children with disabilities into schools, especially in Asia.

114. A delegation commented on the need to further strengthen child survival efforts and the family. Also, the budget titles of programme components relating to ECD and immunization were inconsistent among country programmes. A delegate speaking on behalf of the African States stressed the importance of strengthening the family, together with the building of national capacities for the delivery of essential services. The Executive Director responded that the strengthening of families was a key strategy of the ECD priority, and had been supported, for example, through the community-based Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses initiative and better parenting programmes, which would be expanded. Variations in the titles of budget components of UNICEF-assisted programmes reflected the flexibility of the country programme approach, which supported national priorities.

115. The UNICEF partnership with WHO on child survival was referred to positively by some delegates. To comments that achieving child mortality goals would depend on a significant reduction of neonatal mortality, the secretariat said that UNICEF was expanding its partnerships for child survival, including with the international financial institutions, bilateral donors and the United Nations system, and had established an interim secretariat that would be headed by a senior UNICEF staff member. Increased attention would be given to learning from past experiences in child survival, including intersectoral approaches, and to malaria and measles control. UNICEF was also working with WHO to update a global strategy for immunization, which would incorporate activities supported by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization and could be linked to the international financing facility proposed by the United Kingdom and to collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Speakers referred to the critical role of UNICEF in supporting national ownership, building national capacities and promoting global vaccine security.

116. Several delegates applauded the increased UNICEF expenditure on fighting HIV/AIDS, though some said that it was still insufficient and little has been allocated from international funding mechanisms for orphans and other vulnerable children. One speaker said that HIV/AIDS should be the top priority for development assistance and should be linked to girls' education and support to early childhood care. It was also said that UNICEF support to prevention of HIV/AIDS and care for those affected must also extend to children in unstable and post-conflict situations. The focus on gender issues, the human-rights-based approach and working with young people needed to be strengthened in HIV/AIDS programmes. The legal dimension of protecting those affected by HIV/AIDS should be considered. The Executive Director said that coordination between United Nations agencies in support of national HIV/AIDS programmes had been very good but all actors needed to agree to good coordination principles. Speaking on behalf of African States, a delegation stressed the importance of attention to helping countries to develop national plans against HIV/AIDS, and of involving young people as agents of change.

117. One delegate stressed the important links between the child protection and the Millennium Development Goals, saying that UNICEF was expected to provide leadership in that area. The secretariat agreed that more work was required in the identification of indicators for child protection issues, e.g., juvenile justice, in which UNICEF was working with other agencies.

118. UNICEF work on violence, abuse and exploitation of children, including trafficking and bonded labour, was considered to be of high priority by many delegates, and some suggested that the share of funding for this area be increased. In areas where the organization has no comparative advantage, UNICEF should seek partnerships with NGOs, other agencies or the private sector. UNICEF confirmed its continued advocacy for the adoption of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182 and indicated that the United Nations Study on Violence Against Children faced serious funding shortages.

119. A delegation asked for more details of UNICEF support to children in armed conflict, including child soldiers, particularly in the light of Security Council resolution 1539 (2004). Another speaker said that children's rights were also violated in situations of foreign occupation.

B. Draft country programme documents

120. The Director, Programme Division, gave an overview of the draft CPDs before the Executive Board. Among the lessons learned from their preparation were the benefits of cross-sectoral integration, the importance of integrating emergencies into country programmes, where appropriate, and the need for more communication with and mobilization of communities. Of the 21 programmes, 18 had been developed as part of the joint programming process, and several were linked to PRSPs.

121. Several delegations praised UNICEF for its country programme work and the quality of the CPDs but noted some concerns and suggestions for improving the documents: strengthening the gender perspective, especially in education; clarifying the connection between the CCA/UNDAF and the role of UNICEF in the UNDAF; including a risk analysis, especially on the capacity of UNICEF and partners to achieve results; and taking into account the possibilities and difficulties of capacity-building, providing estimations of national capacity.

122. In addition, UNICEF was encouraged to systematically post UNDAFs on its website; provide Board members with a list of programme countries and cycles; play a greater role in United Nations country teams (using Madagascar as an example); and foster synergies between the United Nations country team and other partners, especially bilateral development agencies. Two delegations said that Board members had to deal with the same agenda items, country programmes and joint programmes, for example, at Board meetings for three different organizations. Another speaker urged UNICEF and its partners to make the performance and other criteria for providing support to countries more flexible.

123. The Director welcomed the comments. A list of programme countries and cycles would be given to any delegation requesting it. The joint programming process was full scale and intensive.

Eastern and Southern Africa

124. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPDs for Angola, Burundi, Madagascar and Zimbabwe (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.1 — E/ICEF/2004/P/L.4), which were introduced by the Regional Director.

125. A speaker complimented UNICEF on its work in Africa, especially in the areas of child survival, maternal health and girls' education. UNICEF had effectively responded to massive population displacement, outbreaks of disease and difficulties in access to public health care. Result matrices should be included in draft CPDs in order to provide a clearer picture of the proposed country programme outcomes and the mechanism that would be used to achieve those results.

126. The representative of **Angola** spoke of the positive impact of UNICEF efforts to promote national ownership of programmes, rebuild routine immunization systems, and support the recent finalization of a national HIV/AIDS strategy, the disarmament and reintegration of children affected by war and demining programmes. Delegations said that the draft CPD was relevant to the country's situation, although one speaker said that in view of

the precarious situation in the country, the programme should focused on a flexible transition from service delivery to capacity-building. A delegation commended the programme's focus on education, building national statistical capacities and coordination with all partners, including the national authorities, and asked if there was plan for joint programmes with common plans and budgets, and if it could be included in the revised CPD. To questions about the specific role of UNICEF in programming for the returning population, the Regional Director emphasized that UNICEF supported integration of children affected by conflict into their communities through long-term investment in their families/communities, especially schools and other training opportunities.

127. The representative of **Burundi** said that the CPD was in line with the UNDAF and based on national priorities. Another speaker said that the CPD had a clear human rights perspective, but did not stress enough the fragility of the political situation and the implications of the expected return of 800,000 refugees from the United Republic of Tanzania. The Regional Director said that UNICEF was working closely in both countries with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on a returnee programme. Delegations said their should be more focus on the reintegration of child soldiers, and one asked about a related project that was being funded by the World Bank. The Regional Director said that national reconciliation and peace education were now part of the curriculum and were being introduced into the school programme. Negotiations with the World Bank were ongoing and financial resources were expected soon from the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme. A delegation said that the proposed CPD was too general and insufficiently focused on the particular situation in Burundi, especially on community capacity development. The speaker commented on weak partnerships with such international health-related institutions as UNAIDS, WHO and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Referring to baseline statistics and expected outcomes, one speaker suggested that the analysis in the CPD focus on different age groups. The Regional Director spoke of the effective introduction of the DevInfo system in Burundi.

128. The representative of **Madagascar** referred to the positive outcomes achieved through the dynamic collaboration between his Government and its development partners, especially in the areas of good governance and the fight against corruption, basic education, immunization and maternal and child health. To comments on girls' education, including concerns about the quality of education and on the reliability of indicators that were used to measure changes, the Regional Director said that the programme planned to use such innovative approaches as the "sister" programme, which aimed at reducing girls' drop-out rates through a "buddy" system of older girls helping younger ones. Another speaker voiced concern about the ambitious objectives contained in the CPD.

129. The representative of **Zimbabwe** sought clarification on the reasons for the short-term period of the proposed country programme. The Regional Director replied that the two-year duration for the programme had been agreed upon by the Resident Coordinator and the country team, in consultation with the national authorities. Another delegation said because most bilateral donors had stopped direct cooperation with the Government and were supporting civil society, UNICEF should serve as an advocate for children in relation to the Government. The Regional Director said that to a large extent UNICEF was already playing this role, and the revised CPD would reflect it more clearly. A delegation said that a recent

mission to Zimbabwe had reported on two joint United Nations programmes being planned with a common workplan and budget, and suggested that this be reflected in the revised CPD. Referring to recent UNICEF/WFP recommendations that UNICEF focus on chronic malnutrition, a speaker said that the malnutrition figures in Zimbabwe were not particularly high by emergency standards. Instead, UNICEF should give strong emphasis to HIV/AIDS and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. In addition, the CPD was weak on the role of the Government, and should have more analysis on needed investment in health and education. The Regional Director explained that the low rate of investment in education and health was partly a result of economic sanctions. The rapidly growing number of orphans, currently over 1 million, had negatively affected school enrolment rate.

West and Central Africa

130. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPD for Cape Verde (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.5), which was introduced by the Regional Director. She was accompanied by a 14-year-old girl from Niger who told the Board about her participation in the Nigerien Scout Movement. With support from UNICEF, the scouts had received training on HIV/AIDS education which helped them to teach other young people about responsible behaviour in the face of this threat.

131. On the draft CPD for Cape Verde, the representative of that country expressed appreciation for the quality of the proposed country programme. He referred to the complementarities of the work of UNICEF with that of FAO and WFP in meeting the nutritional needs of children through school canteens. The Regional Director reiterated the support of UNICEF for Cape Verde, including a programme being undertaken in collaboration with WFP and other organizations, called the Alliance for Sahelian Countries, which would include Cape Verde, Mali and Niger, to promote girls' education in particular. Another delegation said that the CPD was ambitious, particularly in the education sector, as school enrolments were still low, teacher training needed to be strengthened and schools needed better equipment. The section of the CPD on sexual exploitation could be stronger. Another speaker expressed appreciation for the emphasis on rights-based programming. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF was aware of the issue of early pregnancy, which she herself had discussed with the President.

East Asia and the Pacific

132. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPDs for Malaysia and the Philippines (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.8 - E/ICEF/2004/P/L.9), which were introduced by the Regional Director. She also reported on current major issues in the region. Recently, a major international communication campaign about trafficking had been launched by the Governments of China and Viet Nam, aimed at changing communities' attitudes and behaviour towards girls, the primary victims of trafficking. She also spoke about child injuries in East Asia, which accounted for one half of all annual child deaths. A recent regional conference on the issue, sponsored by the Alliance for Safe Children and UNICEF, would lead to development of programmes on child injury prevention in many countries of the region.

133. A 17-year-old girl from Mongolia presented her experiences, along with those of other children, on working with the Mongolian Parliament to influence legislation on juvenile justice issues.

134. A delegation expressed satisfaction at the sense of growing cooperation among countries in the region through periodic ministerial consultations. The Regional Director replied that the consultations had expanded to include donor countries from the region.

135. A speaker expressed support for the proposed country programme for **Malaysia**, saying that while Malaysia was making good progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, some child development problems remained. The representative of Malaysia expressed appreciation to UNICEF for the country programme, while expressing concern on the proposed withdrawal from Malaysia after 2007. UNICEF had much to contribute to Malaysia in terms of experience sharing, capacity-building and fund-raising. There was a need for a continued UNICEF presence in Malaysia beyond 2007, and innovative funding opportunities to augment the country programme budget from within Malaysia could be explored.

136. A speaker expressed support for the disparity reduction strategy of the programme for the **Philippines**, and the prevention of trafficking of children and women. The representative of the Philippines highlighted significant activities achieved by the Government with UNICEF assistance, including the 25-year framework plan for development for children called "CHILD-21", and its mainstreaming in national and local plans; and the "child-friendly" movement, which had begun in 1999 and gained nationwide momentum nationwide. Another speaker mentioned the long-standing partnership between the Government of the Philippines, UNICEF and her Government. She pointed out the importance of the link to the MTSP, and the need to highlight the work on child protection issues, conflict affected areas and peace-building.

Americas and the Caribbean

137. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPD for the Southern Cone countries of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.6), which was introduced by the Regional Director.

138. Delegations welcomed the subregional approach of the programmes and their rights-based approach. A speaker emphasized the need to support programmes in countries in transition and to shift from the traditional focus on service delivery to a more strategic focus on influencing social policy at the institutional level.

139. The representative of **Chile** expressed regret that UNICEF would no longer allocate regular resources to his country as of 2008. Although there was a need to prioritize the poorest countries, a mechanism was needed to consolidate the strategic role of UNICEF in Chile. The country's indicators did not necessarily reflect its social inequalities. He underscored the problems of violence and the still pending legal reform in his country. He also recommended evaluating on a regular basis the level of resources generated within Chile, as was the case for Argentina, Mexico and Uruguay.

140. One delegation stated that UNICEF partnerships in the region were very important to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Regional Director replied that the Goals offered an opportunity for the United Nations system to concentrate on fundamental issues, and that all countries were increasingly incorporating them into their public policies.

141. To comments on HIV/AIDS and access to generic drugs, the Regional Director referred to cooperation between Brazil and other countries in the region to reach agreements and obtain better prices. UNICEF was also participating in an initiative of the Pan American Health Organization under which every pregnant girl is tested for HIV to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.

142. To concerns about violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, the Regional Director said that UNICEF supported Governments in developing legislative agendas to prevent these crimes. Asked if UNICEF had a strategy and funding for the ministerial meeting on violence against children and adolescents, to take place in Costa Rica this year as part of the Ibero-American Summit, he replied that UNICEF had approached donors for more support. Responding to a comment about the lack of reference to the Inter-American Children's Institute in the list of strategic partnerships mentioned in the CPD, he said that UNICEF and the Institute were coordinating on a presentation on the regional harmonization of laws related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child for the ministerial meeting.

143. Responding to a statement about migration, the Regional Director reported that UNICEF had recently completed a study stating that every 58 seconds, one person is lost from the region to permanent migration, and the social costs of this phenomenon were high for abandoned children. UNICEF had some modest projects in this area but much more needed to be done. Asked about UNICEF work with disabilities, he said that UNICEF was in dialogue with Rehabilitation International for possible collaboration. On the issue of malnutrition, he recalled a recent meeting on iodine deficiency disorders held in Lima, Peru. Some 16 per cent of households in the region did not have access to iodized salt. UNICEF was looking at issues of how to strengthen capacities and dialogue on chronic, acute and global malnutrition in the region.

144. A delegation expressed concern that the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) would be leaving that country after 10 years of fruitful work, and said that there was a need to carry on with the goals of the peace accords, which were fully in line with the Millennium Development Goals. The Regional Director acknowledged that the exit of a mission of nearly 600 people would be a challenge for the United Nations country team.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

145. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPDs for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.10 - E/ICEF/2004/P/L.20), which were introduced by the Regional Director. The UNICEF Representative for Tajikistan also presented the draft CPD for that country.

146. Many delegations commended UNICEF for taking a leading role in the recent CCA/UNDAF exercises that had preceded the preparation of the draft CPDs, and for its involvement in countries in transition, evolving role in the region and effective work at the regional and community levels. Several speakers referred to the Second Inter-Governmental Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia, held in Sarajevo in May 2004. Others expressed concern about such key problems as the high level of child mortality; the spread of HIV/AIDS; the use of drugs; the most socially disadvantaged groups including refugees and disabled children; violence against children; trafficking of women and children; and the need to strengthen assistance to post-conflict countries and countries in transition.

147. A number of delegations suggested that UNICEF expand its partnerships with such agencies as the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and USAID; have specific and disaggregated key indicators in the CPDs to assess progress and evaluate results along with monitoring plans; join other donors in not providing payments directly to local officials for coordination purposes; and use existing technical expertise in the region for better implementation of country programmes.

148. The representative of **Azerbaijan** referred to some 600,000 women and children refugees and internally displaced persons in his country, who suffered from physical and psychological trauma as a result of the ongoing conflict. There was a need to strengthen the institutional framework to address child-related issues through exchange of experiences with experts from countries with similar backgrounds. He added that the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan had been unable to attend the meeting due to the delay in visa issuance by the host country's embassy in Baku, and this had not been the first time.

149. On the CPD for **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, a number of delegations recommended that the revised document include steps to facilitate and improve statistical reporting, analysis, evaluation and monitoring; that UNICEF be encouraged to promote child and human rights in the country, including education and child protection reform; and that national capacity-building be further prioritized.

150. The representative of **Kazakhstan** raised the issue of inadequate efforts to improve the social, economic and environmental situations of the long suffering areas of the Aral Sea and requested more effective assistance to the affected regions.

151. The representative of **Serbia and Montenegro** said that although many issues were facing children in her country, due attention should be given to children in Kosovo, where one half of the population was under 25 years old, and ethnically motivated violence, crimes and terrorist attacks were major problems, especially for children of minorities. The Regional Director said that UNICEF worked with the provincial institutions of self-government and the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo to address issues of social exclusion through the education programme.

152. The delegation of **Tajikistan** suggested that special attention be given to promoting a supportive environment for civil society and NGOs that would be involved in the implementation of the new country programme, and to expanding the participation of children and young people in social life. Several other speakers stressed the importance of assisting post-conflict countries like Tajikistan. UNICEF could play a role in a dialogue with

central ministries, particularly the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, on policies relating to children's rights. UNICEF was urged to react to the increasing number of girls dropping out after the first years of school. The UNICEF Representative for Tajikistan spoke of UNICEF cooperation with national partners and a UNICEF-supported study on the causes of girls dropping out of school.

153. On the draft CPD for **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, one delegation said that the programme reflected well-chosen goals and interventions, including the fight against HIV/AIDS, despite the still low infection rate in the country. The speaker encouraged UNICEF to take a strong advocacy role in addressing the significant lack of information about diseases and the existence of organized crime dealing with drugs and trafficking of women.

154. The representative of **Turkmenistan** said that while the draft CPD contained some suggestive conclusions, such as the reduced concern of the Government and weakened social assistance programme for children, slow structural reforms in education and health care, and discrepancies in assessments of indicators for children and maternal mortality, the Government appreciated its 10-year close cooperation with UNICEF in improving the situation of children and women. He hoped that there would be a full mutual understanding of the goals for creating favourable conditions for the development of Turk children. The Regional Director took note of the concerns raised.

155. The delegation of **Uzbekistan** said that its Government would do everything possible to ensure the well-being of the children and women in the country, and called on the donor community to support the country programme.

156. The Regional Director called for strengthened aid to this region, which was underresourced and the other resources ceilings were quite conservative. The next eight years were window of opportunity for making a real difference in achieving child rights.

Middle East and North Africa

157. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPDs for the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq, as well as a recommendation to increase the other resources ceiling for the approved country programme for Iraq for 2004 (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.21 - E/ICEF/2004/L.23), which were introduced by the Regional Director. He also commented on recent developments in the region. While noting the peace advancement in the Sudan with the signing of the framework agreement, he referred to the "new and terrible conflict" in Darfur. On the Occupied Palestinian Territory, he said that unless there was a sudden lessening of the conflict or other improvements in the economy, there would be a major breakdown in the health and nutrition of children within the next few years. At the Arab League's ministerial meeting, held in Tunis in March, a plan of action for the Arab child had been endorsed A number of important recommendations on children had been adopted by the Arab League Summit in May.

158. Delegations found the CPD for **Iraq** to be realistic, especially with regard to capacity-building. All speakers recognized the difficult security conditions under which UNICEF staff worked. To a request for additional information about the "cluster approach", the Regional Director said that it was a turning point for the international community on how to approach

emergencies. Another delegation encouraged UNICEF to include more information and details on innovative thinking for programme delivery and within the existing security constraints. A speaker asked where the regional focus would be, in view of the UNICEF presence in Baghdad, Basra and Erbil in Iraq and in Amman. The Regional Director agreed on the need for additional information on innovative means for programme delivery and security conditions that curtailed activities on the ground. While the Iraq office was presently operating out of Amman, he hoped that soon, Baghdad would again serve as the UNICEF centre of operations for the country. A speaker said that the draft CPD was consistent with Iraq's national priorities and needs and the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Speakers also noted the rights approach to programming in the CPD, adding that there was a welcome opportunity to focus on salt iodization and nutrient fortification activities. Another delegation asked about current needs in childcare and the availability of health supplies and water in the country. The Regional Director said that a number of large-scale surveys had been completed and would be published by the end of June.

159. The representative of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** referred to the soundness of the programme and expressed satisfaction at the acknowledgement of the country's proneness to natural disasters. He asked whether adequate attention had been paid to the issue of drug trafficking and its effect on children. The Regional Director, referring to his recent visit to Zahedan, acknowledged the work done by the Government in relief operations following the devastating earthquake in Bam. He agreed that the drug trafficking component should be strengthened in the revised CPD.

160. See annex, decision 2004/6, for the decision of the Executive Board on the draft CPDs.

Statement by Director, Regional Office for Europe

161. The Regional Director for Europe said that combined with growing awareness of illegal trafficking of children, and residual poverty and exclusion affecting children in some social groups in the industrialized world, the issue of independent monitoring of child rights within rich nations remained a key concern of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Some 23 European States now had either a children's ombudsperson or some other form of independent monitoring of children's rights. The National Committees for UNICEF were involved in supporting the preparation of national reports to the Committee, and in follow-up to the Special Session on Children. The Committees' primary purpose, however, was fund-raising, and in 2003 UNICEF income from the Committees was higher than ever, with the Japanese Committee alone contributing more than $100 million. The National Committees were also undertaking internal reform, and effective governance was an agreed element in each of the Joint Strategic Plans undertaken by UNICEF and individual Committees.

C. Assessment of the UNICEF experience of joint programming

162. The Director, Programme Division, presented a report on the assessment of the UNICEF experience in joint programming and other innovative and collaborative approaches (E/ICEF/2004/10).

163. A number of delegations thanked UNICEF for its leadership role in joint programming and expressed their support for its continued efforts to meet the challenges faced by the United Nations. Joint programming provided the opportunity to expand cooperation among the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies and noted the importance of the UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming both as a reference document and as a fundamental part of United Nations reform initiatives. One speaker expressed optimism about joint programming helping to reach the targets of both the MTSP and the Millennium Development Goals.

164. The importance given to national ownership and national development priorities in the joint programming process and in joint programmes was welcomed. One speaker said that this augured well for the sustainability of programmes, while another said that national ownership combined with decentralization would enhance programmatic effectiveness. However, a delegation cautioned that joint programmes should be carried out only with government approval.

165. All speakers emphasized the potential offered by the joint programming process and joint programmes for reducing duplication and transaction costs and for increasing coordination and efficiency. One delegation stated noted that current economic growth in Africa would not be sufficient to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and stressed the importance of the United Nations exploring ways to eliminate duplication and to use resources effectively.

166. A number of delegations said they appreciated the distinction given, both in the UNDG Guidance Note and in the presentation, between joint programming and joint programmes. They cautioned that joint programmes did not necessarily follow from joint programming and stressed that a pragmatic approach to joint programmes must be taken to ensure they could add value. The attributes of each United Nations agency should not be lost in a joint programme.

167. The link between PRSPs and the joint programming process, particularly the CCA and UNDAF, was stressed. A number of delegations noted that UNICEF was aligning its work with PRSPs and SWAps, which helped to prioritize children's issues.

168. Delegations said there should be increased resources and strengthened staff capacities, as well as the provision of clear guidance, to ensure the success of joint programming. However, one delegation said that increasing staff capacity should not result in reduced funds for programmes.

169. Speakers expressed concern about the slow pace of implementation of joint programmes and the few examples to date of these programmes. More needed to be done to accelerate joint programme implementation and pooling of resources to improve programme delivery. One delegation said "business as usual" was not an option and expressed the view, supported by several delegations, that the United Nations should be able to plan and implement one United Nations country programme.

170. One delegation said that although UNICEF was an active partner in the United Nations country team, doubts existed about the full commitment of UNICEF to United

Nations reform and to working with other United Nations agencies to bring it about. Several delegations stressed the need for UNICEF to cooperate more fully with United Nations partners at the country level.

171. Delegations requested that UNICEF set targets for joint programmes and report back to the Executive Board on progress in the implementation of those programmes. One speaker said that this reporting should include information on the percentage of total resources allocated to joint programmes.

172. The representative of the National Committees for UNICEF, while welcoming the UNDG Guidance Note, said that around one third of the resources of UNCEF was raised by the Committees and that the ability of UNICEF to report on its work should not be diminished by the requirements of joint programming.

173. The Director said that the comments encouraged UNICEF to do better both as a member of the UNDG and as a member of the United Nations country team. The collective aim was a harmonized programming process to support countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The first phase in that process included the CCA and UNDAF, which had improved significantly. The introduction of the results matrix had led to shared common outcomes among the United Nations agencies. He underscored the link between the PRSPs and the CCA/UNDAF and said that the ability of the United Nations country team to participate in PRSPs was dependent on a Government's request. While the United Nations country teams still lacked experience in the implementation phase of joint programming, more experience in more countries was forthcoming, together with improvements in the monitoring and evaluation phase.

174. The Director reiterated the commitment of UNICEF to participate in the implementation of joint programmes, where appropriate. and emphasized that there were no administrative, operational or programmatic restrictions on UNICEF participation in joint programmes and in the funds management options. He reiterated the commitment of UNICEF to ensuring that staff were fully equipped to follow the UNDG Guidance Note. A detailed guide on joint programming and the operational details of joint programmes would be issued soon.

175. See annex, decision 2004/8 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

D. Progress report on the evaluation function in UNICEF

176. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on the evaluation function in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2004/11), which was introduced by the Director of the Evaluation Office.

177. Delegations commented on the importance of the findings of the meta-evaluation undertaken by UNICEF on the quality of its evaluations, and recognized that much remained to be done to sharpen their focus and improve their quality. UNICEF needed to continue to strengthen norms and standards to improve the quality of evaluations at the level of country offices.

178. Some delegations highlighted the importance of the work undertaken in the area of capacity-building, for both national partners and UNICEF staff, and the importance of strengthening evaluation associations. A delegation also lauded UNICEF efforts to make evaluation more participatory, while recognizing that the approach was a challenge.

179. Most delegations endorsed the proposal to do fewer but better, high-quality and more strategically selected evaluations. The issue of the prioritization of evaluations was also raised, as was the need to focus on the five MTSP priorities. A delegate suggested a closer correlation between the MTSP priorities and the Millennium Development Goals in the choice of evaluations.

180. A number of delegations stressed the importance of collaboration by country offices with the United Nations country teams on country programme evaluations, joint evaluative exercises to enhance overall United Nations capacities in evaluation. They also stressed the need to formulate an evaluation mechanism for the UNDAF. Delegations encouraged UNICEF to pursue its efforts in collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Group to reach a system-wide consensus on norms and standards.

181. Several delegations welcomed the fact that the report provided the findings of key evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office. One encouraged UNICEF to provide regular updates on the linkages between results-based management and evaluation. A speaker suggested that UNICEF increase financial and staff resources for evaluations, and stressed the key role of regional offices in evaluation.

182. See annex, decision 2004/9, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

E. Orphans and other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS: panel discussion

183. Mr. Peter McDermott, Chief of the UNICEF HIV/AIDS Section, highlighted the key roles played by UNICEF in the protection, care and support of children, including as a global convenor; in fostering programme and intellectual leadership; and in promoting partnerships and strong advocacy. He emphasized the importance of meeting the goals of the General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS; agreements on what needed to be done; and the clear consensus and guidance provided by the new Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS.

184. Ms. Anne Peterson, Assistant Administrator for Global Health, USAID, detailed her Government's response in partnership with UNICEF and others. She emphasized the programmatic focus of USAID on all orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) (from all causes); the importance of the full range of child survival and development interventions; and strengthened mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating programme and national-level progress.

185. Ms. Silvia Stefanoni, Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom, described the partnership with UNICEF in Rwanda, highlighting the distinct comparative advantages of the two funds; the contributions made to the strengthening of the Rwandan response to the

orphan crises of the past decade; and the key links between monitoring progress at community level and improved reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

186. Delegations praised the clarity and thoroughness of the presentations. Most delegations agreed that OVC were critical elements of the UNICEF response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and that they deserved greater attention at all levels, and a central place in prevention, care and support activities.

187. Several delegations highlighted particular concerns and issues: not losing focus on the importance of prevention (and the availability of condoms for young people); prolonging the lives of HIV-positive parents and children with improved health care and nutrition and access to anti-retroviral drugs; the need for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and countries submitting proposals to the Fund, to better address the orphans crisis, with more emphasis placed on the capacity of UNICEF to help countries apply for funds; the impact of gender and geographic (rural/urban) issues on orphans; in addition to the African crisis, the emergence of serious concerns in Latin America and the Caribbean and all other regions; the need to advocate for OVC within PRSPs; the interest in the new Framework and the leadership provided by UNICEF; and the new campaign on OVC announced by the National Committees for UNICEF.

188. In response to queries, the representative of USAID described the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and drug access and anti-retroviral treatment programmes and policies. She explained that keeping parents alive was key and underlined the USAID strategy of providing better nutrition and treatment to infected children and parents, especially women.

189. The Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section said that Governments needed to assume a greater role in the care of orphans and that legislation and a system for monitoring the adequacy of government responses was important. He highlighted important partnership-strengthening (among UNICEF, USAID and WFP, especially) and rapid assessments and responses to the orphan crisis in Africa. The UNICEF Executive Director and other leaders had stressed the importance of placing OVC higher on the agenda of the Global Fund and countries also needed to prioritize that area.

190. UNICEF was collaborating with UNDP and UNFPA, both key members of the inter-agency task team, and country-level collaboration was improving in some places. The United Nations Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group on AIDS had developed precise indicators and field testing of the instruments was under way in Jamaica and Malawi. Regarding children who lived and worked on the streets, better survey methodologies had been developed to more precisely track those groups in data collection and to target interventions.

191. UNICEF and other agencies had emphasized the role of communities and the importance of getting resources to the community level to deal with the next generation of orphans. In the past year, UNICEF had increased its work with faith-based organizations and parliamentarians in caring for orphans stigmatized because of HIV.

F. Reports on field visits of Executive Board members

192. The Executive Board had before it reports on three field visits. The report on the joint visit to Guatemala by members of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP (E/ICEF/2004/CRP.8) was introduced by the Vice-President and Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations. He said there was a need to strengthen the functions of the resident coordinator and the United Nations funds, agencies and programmes in the country, given the fact that MINUGUA would end on 31 December 2004. Other speakers said that efforts to promote and maintain the peace accords coincided with efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. More work needed to be done in several areas, especially in protecting the rights of indigenous peoples.

193. The report on the field visit of Executive Board members to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (E/ICEF/2004/CRP.7) was introduced by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations. Members of the team said that Congolese children and women faced some of the worst conditions in the world, including HIV/AIDS, rape and other violence, high infant and child mortality rates, recruitment of child soldiers and poor education. They commended the UNICEF country office for its work despite those challenges and urged the Government, as well as UNICEF and its partners, to make every effort to protect the rights of children and women. Another delegation noted that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers needed urgent attention. One speaker stated that financial constraints were the greatest obstacle to progress and called for greater international assistance in building peace and in attaining the Millennium Development Goals and other commitments. The Executive Director said that, globally, perpetrators of gender violence as a tool of conflict were acting with impunity and she called on Member States to take action to stop this practice.

194. The report on the visit of Bureau members to Guyana (E/ICEF/2004/CRP.9) was introduced by the Vice-President and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations. Several delegations said that good progress was being made in areas that included capacity-building, expansion of the Escuela Nueva programme and results-oriented collaboration among United Nations agencies. One delegation said that the programme of cooperation between the Government and UNICEF could serve as a prototype for other agencies. Another speaker said that during the visit, the Bureau expressed a strong opinion in favour of raising the legal age of consent for girls to engage in sexual conduct, and that the Government had since pledged to raise it.

G. Timing of the approval of the UNICEF biennial support budget

195. The Executive Board had before it a report on the timing of the approval of the UNICEF biennium support budget (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.2) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.3). The Comptroller introduced the report, which had been prepared in response to the Executive Board decision 2003/17 (E/ICEF/2003/9/Rev.1), in which the Board requested the Executive Director to explore options for the timing of the approval of the support budget in the context of one of the existing regular Board sessions.

196. The Comptroller stated that UNICEF did not consider the second regular session in September as an option, in order to ensure the continuation principle that the plan drives the budget, and to maintain the decentralized and integrated approach, which had been very successful. The secretariat recommended that the support budget be reviewed at the first regular session in January, and UNICEF would request the Executive Board to approve a one-month appropriation for the first month of the biennium at the second regular session in September. She added that the Advisory Committee remained of the opinion that the support budget should be reviewed before the beginning of the biennium.

197. Speakers expressed support for the principle of the plan driving the budget, adding that holding an extraordinary session in December placed a burden on delegations because of the meetings of the General Assembly. One speaker expressed concern about deciding on the support budget after the biennium had begun and asked if the budget could be discussed in draft form in September, with the formal approval at the January session. The Comptroller clarified that if the Board reviewed the budget at the January session, at the September session it would only be approving a one-month appropriation for January, until the biennial budget had been reviewed and approved at the January session.

198. See annex, decision 2004/7, for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

H. Working methods of the Executive Board

199. The Vice-President of the Executive Board from the Western European and Others group of States presented a report on working methods of the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2004/CRP.10), which had been prepared in response to Executive Board decision 2004/4. She reviewed progress in a number of areas and made the following recommendations on behalf of the Bureau:

(a) that the secretariat continue to offer an annual briefing in January for new Board members, but that it be less than a day;

(b) that the secretariat continue to make Board documents available six weeks in advance of a meeting and that it continue to organize informal consultations on agenda items;

(c) that invitations be sent to all Board members for these briefings and that advance notice be also included in the Journal so that interested observers can choose to attend;

(d) that, in preparation for oral reports, a two-page conference room paper be circulated to assist delegations to prepare for interactive discussion;

(e) that the secretariat prepare a work plan for approval by the Bureau to systematically review progress on each of the MTSP goals between the second regular session in September 2004 and September 2005;

(f) that the secretariat revisit the proposed guidelines for field visits and, in consultation with the Bureau, prepare a document for approval at the second regular session in September.

200. On behalf of the African members of the Executive Board, a delegation highlighted the importance of the informal briefings organized by the secretariat prior to the Board's sessions, because they contributed to a better understanding of the technical items on the Board's agenda. The African delegations urged the secretariat to continue including an item on HIV/AIDS on the agenda, and expressed their appreciation to the Board for putting an African country on the field visit agenda each year, which maintained a focus on Africa and its many problems. Other delegations agreed that there had been improvements in the Board's working methods. One speaker noted improvements in the organization of the joint meetings of the Executive Boards, but another said that these still needed improvement. It was also suggested that there be a common framework for all field visits, and that the Board review and limit the number of reports it asked the secretariat to prepare.

201. The secretariat took note of the recommendations and said it would do its best to implement them. The Executive Director added that the secretariat was always open to suggestions as to how to improve the Board's working methods.

I. Other matters

Address by the Chairperson of the Global Staff Association

202. The Chairperson of the Global Staff Association (GSA) reported that at the GSA annual general meeting in June 2004, 25 staff, representing the nearly 10,000 UNICEF employees worldwide, had identified ways to improve UNICEF. In May, the GSA had surveyed staff who had highlighted several areas of concern: the non-competitive and inequitable remuneration of UNICEF staff; the fact that remuneration and career advancement were not linked to performance; unequal risks and burdens borne by staff; poor compliance of field offices with security standards; lack of privacy regarding HIV/AIDS under the Medical Insurance Plan in the field; the need for a UNICEF ombudsman's office, and for new performance goals and standards on the participation of staff in United Nations reform; and the need for the Board to support a transparent and effective process for selecting and appointing the new UNICEF Executive Director.

The situation in the Darfur region of Sudan: an oral report

203. The Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa reported on the situation of children and women in the Darfur region of Sudan, where more than 1 million people had fled their homes following months of conflict. A cease-fire had been extended until mid-August. Around 850,000 people were in camps and another 110,000 people had fled to neighbouring Chad. Around 575,000 children were acutely malnourished, and the nutrition situation was expected to seriously worsen.

204. UNICEF was the lead agency for providing safe drinking water to the area. UNICEF was also helping to build latrines; train social mobilizers in hygiene; provide vitamin A supplementation; and supply foodstuffs and therapeutic feeding material, basic drugs, mosquito nets and midwifery kits. A measles immunization campaign was planned to reach more than 2 million children. Efforts to establish and supply temporary schools in camps had resulted in high enrolment, especially among girls. Protection efforts included child tracing,

family reunification and assessments of child soldiers. An appeal had been launched for $46.4 million but only $9.7 million had been received, leaving a serious funding gap.

Other items

205. Referring to an informal information note about the January 2005 joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP that had been distributed, one speaker said that if additional suggestions and proposals were made for revising the agreed-upon agenda, Member States should be informed of them well in advance of the meeting.

J. Closing of the session

206. Ms. Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director, said that the Board had given the secretariat guidance in a number of important areas. These included the valuable comments on the Executive Director's annual report and on the draft CPDs. The discussion on joint programming would continue both in the Executive Board and during the upcoming TCPR. In the meantime, however, UNICEF would continue its work with many partners at the programme and project levels.

207. The President said that the session had been interactive, with participation by a wide range of delegations. On joint programming, he said that there had been some confusion between joint programming as a process and joint programmes as a product, but now delegations had a better understanding of the issues. He hoped that the secretariat would be able to report in a few years on how joint programming helped the United Nations to do business better and at a lower cost. The fact that there was no substantive decision on the subject indicated that there were still mixed feelings on the issue.

Part three
Second regular session of 2004

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 13 to 16 September 2004

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

208. The President of the Executive Board said that the world was becoming more and more dangerous and violent, and the primary victims were children and women. The most recent horrendous event had been the kidnapping of schoolchildren in Beslan, Russian Federation, which had resulted in the deaths of more than 160 children. He asked the Executive Board to observe a moment of silence in their memory.

209. Continuing, he said that UNICEF had responded to humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Sudan and elsewhere, feeding the hungry, and providing safe drinking water and medical supplies. He went on to highlight the importance of the UNICEF priority of integrated early childhood development (IECD), especially because quality investments during early childhood offered the best promise of breaking the cycle of poverty. Countries must commit themselves to the goal of giving every child the best start in life.

210. The Executive Director said that the sheer scale of suffering and heartbreak seen in the Beslan massacre or the humanitarian catastrophe in Chad and Sudan were more than anyone could fully grasp. When seen alongside outrages like the recent murder of a staff member of *Médicins sans frontières* in Afghanistan or natural disasters like the recent hurricanes in the Caribbean, they represented the non-stop emergencies that were rapidly becoming the norm for UNICEF and its partners. UNICEF had convened a Global Consultation in Dubai in July as a step towards strengthening UNICEF effectiveness in the face of these and other challenges. The meeting, attended by all UNICEF Representatives, other senior staff and National Committees, had focused on how best to use the MTSP to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

B. Adoption of the agenda

211. The provisional agenda and proposed timetable and organization of work of the session (E/ICEF/2004/12) was introduced by the Secretary of the Executive Board and adopted, as amended orally. Item 16, the UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the 2002-2003 biennium, was deferred to the Board's first regular session of 2005 so that the Board could benefit from the Fifth Committee's discussion of the report.

212. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex to the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that 46 observer delegations had submitted credentials for the session. In addition, 1 specialized agency, 5 National Committees for UNICEF and Palestine had also submitted credentials.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2004 that are of relevance to UNICEF: oral report

213. The Director, Office of United Nations Affairs and External Relations, cited the Council's increasing focus on the inter-linked nature of United Nations activities in areas of development, humanitarian crisis, peace and security and human rights.

214. During its high-level segment, Ministers adopted a Declaration that reaffirmed commitments in the Brussels Programme of Action. The Ministers urged the world's 50 poorest nations to translate its goals into specific measures within national development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies.

215. In the coordination segment, the Council adopted a resolution on system-wide implementation of the Council's agreed conclusions on gender mainstreaming. The Council's text on coordinated and integrated United Nations system approach to promoting rural development called for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the agencies of the system, especially at country level, on the basis of the CCA/UNDAF.

216. The annual panel of the UNDG Executive Heads was part of the operational activities segment. The UNICEF Executive Director had addressed security issues and follow-up to the Greentree Report. The UNDP Administrator addressed the resident coordinator system and the readiness of the United Nations system in the field to play its full role in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Executive Director of UNFPA spoke about the CCA/UNDAF process and highlighted results of the reform process at the country level. The Senior Deputy Executive Director of WFP addressed growing challenges due to HIV/AIDS combined with poverty, hunger and a range of other developmental issues. The Council's operational activities segment highlighted its increasingly high-level policy perspective on issues, leaving more operational aspects to individual Executive Boards.

217. The discussion of the transition from relief to development included a briefing by Deputy Executive Director Kul Gautam on the outcome of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues. In a panel on "Transition on the Ground – Challenges in Planning and Management", the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator moderated a discussion with the Liberian Minister for Planning and Economic Affairs, the United Nations country team for Liberia and the WHO representative in Sierra Leone. A panel on "Challenges in Supporting Transition", chaired by Ms. Julia Taft, UNDP Assistant Administrator, included presentations by representatives of the Governments of Liberia, the Netherlands and Sierra Leone and the World Bank and the United Nations.

218. The Council's humanitarian affairs segment focused on present and future challenges in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance, with panels on natural disasters and humanitarian assistance missions in higher-risk environments. The resulting resolution addressed the need for enhanced collaboration within the United Nations system for the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

B. Mid-term review of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2002-2005

219. The Executive Board had before it the report on the mid-term review (MTR) of the MTSP (E/ICEF/2004/13), which was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director (Programmes).

220. Delegations expressed appreciation for the critical assessment and frank and comprehensive nature of the report, which identified both strengths and weaknesses of the plan. Several speakers complimented UNICEF for the wide-ranging consultative process undertaken for the MTR. One delegation noted that the number of country offices involved (23 out of over 120) may not be sufficient. Some delegations noted that the regional consultations convened were useful in garnering support from national Governments.

221. A number of speakers agreed that in many countries the MTSP was the UNICEF response to the Millennium Declaration and several of the Millennium Development Goals. Some called for a better linkage between the Millennium Goals and the priorities in the next plan and for communicating the relationship more effectively. The five MTSP priorities had helped UNICEF to focus its work in countries. Almost all delegations agreed that the current MTSP needed no major revisions, and only limited fine-tuning and adjustments. Some delegates called for UNICEF participation in and contribution to the processes for reporting on the Millennium Development Goals to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

222. Speakers expressed appreciation for the recent external assessment of UNICEF participation in United Nations reform. They requested that UNICEF be proactive and continue its engagement in the reform process with more joint programming, and called for UNICEF and other agencies to take simplification and harmonization beyond the United Nations to other areas as well. One delegation suggested that the current MTSP period be extended to enable the UNDG Executive Committee agencies to have a harmonized programme cycle at the global level.

223. Many delegations asked UNICEF to further develop its role in PRSPs, SWAps and linkages with global funds. Some speakers said that implementation of the MTSP should not override national priorities, and that the MTSP should be a strategic framework helping UNICEF to identify priorities for country programmes. UNICEF was asked to address the anomaly of a three-year PRSP and five-year harmonized programme cycle jointly with other United Nations agencies and development partners at country level.

224. The Deputy Executive Director welcomed suggestions that UNICEF be more proactive in United Nations reform, PRSPs and SWAps, and that it initiate joint programming. Given the correspondence between the MTSP and the Millennium Development Goals, UNICEF would be able to align, articulate and communicate better the priorities of the next plan vis-à-vis those Goals.

225. Some speakers congratulated UNICEF for the progress made in monitoring and evaluation, while others called for further improving results based-management and for sharpening of targets. A speaker noted with concern the high number of audit comments on the quality of annual plans and the lack of integrated monitoring and evaluation plans (IMEPs) at country level.

226. Many speakers said that the current plan had a strong focus on emergency preparedness and response, and stressed that the updated humanitarian strategy should be an integral part of the next plan. The major role of UNICEF in post-conflict transition should be integral to the mainstreaming of the revised CCCs. Another speaker said that given the large expenditure on humanitarian assistance, there was a need for measurable performance goals and better application of results-based management.

227. Many speakers highlighted the need for acceleration in girls' education, specifically the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, the "25 by 2005" initiative and "child-friendly" schools. Some said that UNICEF should address gender issues more comprehensively, as well as the exclusion of minorities, children with disabilities and, in some countries, boys. Speaking on behalf of the African members of the Board, a delegate asked UNICEF to focus on teacher training and quality education for children in primary schools and education for orphans, child-headed households and street children.

228. Some delegations called for further strengthening of child survival interventions, both in the current and next plan, including the development with WHO of the Global Strategy for Immunization, better articulation of the UNICEF contribution to water, hygiene and environmental sanitation, and increased attention to micronutrient deficiencies. UNICEF, together with WHO and other GAVI partners, was commended for its role in ensuring vaccine security.

229. Several speakers agreed with the report concerning the complexity of IECD and making integration work at the country and community levels. For the next plan, suggestions included focusing on such specific components as control of diarrhoeal diseases and malaria, breastfeeding promotion, birth registration, malnutrition and reduction of maternal mortality. IECD should focus on integration at the community and family levels, even if results and outcomes were not immediately obtained, and be fine-tuned on the basis of lessons learned. One speaker expressed concern that indicators for monitoring progress in IECD had not yet been developed, although the priority received considerable resources.

230. Many delegates said that UNICEF was playing a vital role in HIV/AIDS. Some called for close collaboration with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and with other partners, including cosponsors of UNAIDS. Other speakers welcomed the strengthening of interventions for the care and treatment of orphans and for young people through life skills and efforts to end stigma. One speaker said that PMTCT had expanded rapidly in several African countries, mainly due to the work of UNICEF, and called on UNICEF to leverage antiretrovirals for parents. More information was requested on UNICEF staff affected by HIV/AIDS. The Executive Director replied that UNICEF would be happy to share information on its 'Caring for Us' programme.

231. Speakers welcomed the protective environment framework for child protection and called for strengthening the UNICEF response to child labour, child soldiers and trafficking. A delegation said that child participation, working with the family and family reunification were evolving areas requiring further improvements based on research and experience. A speaker said that violence against children and trafficking were not highlighted in the report, and that these areas should be part of legislative reforms supported by UNICEF in many countries. Another delegation said that legal reform fell within the sovereign domain of

national Governments, and that advocacy should not take place at the cost of programme implementation.

232. Several speakers said that UNICEF was successfully pursuing a human rights-based approach to programming in about one half of country programmes and needed to improve its application at country level. Many said that gender mainstreaming, a major area of weakness recognized in the report, needed to be addressed comprehensively, including through a stronger emphasis on gender equality, the rights of women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In addition, collaboration should be strengthened with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women.

233. Asked about environmental health issues in the CEE/CIS region, the secretariat said that UNICEF would work with countries in the region, the United Nations Environment Programme and WHO as part of achieving the relevant Millennium Development Goals.

234. To support the MTSP, several speakers called upon Member States to increase their contributions to regular resources; others called for an improved human resources strategy.

235. Some delegations recognized the work of UNICEF in developing global knowledge on the application of human rights in programmes, in pursuing the Millennium Development Goals in complex situations and in addressing children's issues holistically and said results of this work needed to be documented and shared. Some speakers called for strengthening the role of the Innocenti Research Centre in key areas, including child protection.

236. The secretariat agreed to pursue the suggestions made for the remainder of the current plan and to incorporate findings of the MTR and delegates' comments for the next plan. It was agreed that the framework for the next plan would be made available to members of the Board in February 2005. (See annex, decision 2004/16 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

C. Analysis of the utilization of regular and other resources by country and by aggregate for the priority areas of the medium-term strategic plan

237. The Executive Board had before it a report prepared by the secretariat (E/ICEF/2004/16), which was introduced by the Director, Programme Division.

238. Delegations were encouraged to learn that the target of allocating 50 per cent of regular resources (RR) to sub-Saharan Africa had been met, and hoped that the same trend would continue for LDCs. A speaker said this showed appropriate allocation of resources and a focus on the neediest children. A number of delegations expressed concern about the gap between RR and other resources (OR), however. Others expressed concern that RR allocations for child protection and HIV/AIDS had decreased from 2002 to 2003, and said that the 2005 target of 14 per cent for HIV/AIDS should be met at a minimum.

239. Asked how UNICEF planned to address the funding gap, the Executive Director said that UNICEF was trying to improve reporting on RR. RR was more efficient and less costly than OR and allowed UNICEF to build more capacities. Donors should advise UNICEF what

they needed from the secretariat to help them to increase the RR proportion of their contributions.

240. The Executive Board took note of the report.

D. The updated humanitarian priorities of UNICEF

241. The Executive Board had before it a report prepared by the secretariat, including the revised CCCs (E/ICEF/2004/14), which was introduced by the Director, Office of Emergency Programmes.

242. The Acting Director General of the Humanitarian Office of the European Commission (ECHO) said in her statement that cooperation between ECHO and UNICEF went far beyond financing to include regular dialogue on policy and programme issues. ECHO appreciated the efforts made by UNICEF to improve its monitoring capacity in emergencies, its focus of activities and field presence, as well as the updated CCCs. She underlined the importance of the three basic humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and ECHO's concern about combatants' infringement into humanitarian space. It was critical to reflect that perspective in current discussions on "integrated missions" at the United Nations and elsewhere. ECHO was ready to support UNICEF in its internal capacity-building, including preparedness by country offices and the supply function, results-based management and assessments, and strengthening capacities for rapid deployment.

243. Delegations expressed support for the updated CCCs and for the UNICEF humanitarian agenda. One speaker said that the CCCs should be articulated more clearly in the MTSP, either as a separate or cross-cutting priority. Some speakers said that other agencies should follow the lead of UNICEF and define their core commitments. To a request for information on measures to implement the CCCs, the secretariat replied that it could provide specific information in six months. Real-time evaluations were being prepared (i.e., in Liberia and Darfur) to assess implementation.

244. Speakers commended UNICEF for its support to inter-agency initiatives, particularly the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. To suggestions that the Consolidated Appeals Process be more strategic, the secretariat replied that UNICEF would work with other agencies on this. UNICEF was also encouraged to strengthen its capacity in child protection, and to make greater use of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in its advocacy. The secretariat responded that staff training in child protection had increased.

245. Asked about actions to improve early warning, prevention and emergency preparedness, the secretariat described the inter-agency work being done. UNICEF had developed many emergency preparedness plans, and the challenge was to operationalize them at country level. UNICEF recently had instituted a global "trigger" mechanism, which would give precedence to supply, staff and funds for emergencies that warranted an organization-wide response, e.g., Darfur. It was suggested that while security was of utmost concern, it should not be used as an excuse not to assist vulnerable populations. The secretariat replied that UNICEF would continue to advocate for a field-based security system.

246. The involvement of national bodies and local capacity-building were highlighted as important. The secretariat emphasized the primary responsibility of Member States to respond to emergencies. The UNICEF approach to transition focused on the development of national capacities. One delegation asked about increasing opportunities for local supply procurement for emergencies, and the secretariat agreed to provide more information on how this was a priority for UNICEF.

247. The Executive Board took note of the report.

E. UNICEF follow-up to the fourteenth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board

248. The Executive Board had before it the report (E/ICEF/2004/15), which was introduced by the Chief of the HIV/AIDS Section.

249. To comments that there should be more harmonization with other United Nations agencies, the secretariat responded that UNICEF was working closely with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. A panel had been created on technical issues relating to orphans. UNICEF supported the WHO "3 x 5" initiative and would ensure that the MTSP goals for HIV/AIDS were in line with the "three ones" principles. In accelerating HIV/AIDS programmes, UNICEF would not undermine national efforts. UNICEF had also cooperated with Governments on several initiatives in the past year, including the Secretary-General's Task Force on Women, Girls and HIV/AIDS, the rapid assessments of orphans in 17 Southern African countries and the publication of *Children on the Brink*.

250. A speaker said that UNICEF had made a notable contribution to fighting HIV/AIDS, including through support for the Religious Leaders Initiative. To comments about access to drugs, the secretariat said that there are many difficulties with HIV treatment for children, including the fact that paediatric antiretrovirals cost 10 times more than those for adults, and clinical data were not yet available on paediatric dosages for malnourished children. Replying to a question about funding for countries needing assistance, the Chief said that UNICEF had a responsibility to mobilize additional resources and to work with Governments on advocating for funds.

F. Early childhood development: oral report

251. The Senior Advisor for IECD highlighted the achievements, major challenges, possible adjustments for the current MTSP and suggestions for the longer term. The President of the International Paediatric Association described that organization's commitment to a broad and holistic approach to child health, which included child development.

252. Delegations commended UNICEF for its integrated approach to ECD. They urged UNICEF to continue to support ECD and reiterated their commitment to work closely with UNICEF on this priority. Speakers underlined the importance of an integrated programming approach that reached out to the family and child in a holistic manner. Recognizing the challenge of operationalizing ECD, several speakers urged UNICEF to continue advocating ECD with its partners. ECD should be included in the next MTSP with a sharper focus and

clearer priorities within the context of country-specific needs. IECD should also emphasize the health of women and the fight against maternal mortality.

253. Some speakers described how IECD was working in their countries and welcomed the role of UNICEF. One said that the broad involvement of government and civil society agencies had helped to improve social services, reduce maternal and child mortality and increase school readiness.

254. Most speakers said that elements of ECD contributed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including poverty alleviation, and that ECD was playing a larger role in PRSPs, SWAps and other development plans. Several delegates expressed their appreciation for partnerships with UNESCO, the World Bank, WHO and international NGOs.

255. Delegations underlined the need for balanced regular and other resources for ECD to ensure continuity and the need for enhanced human resource capacities in this area.

256. Responding to a question about why the "I" was dropped from "IECD" in recent UNICEF papers, the secretariat said that ECD was by definition integrated, and that the IECD label made this work seem unique to UNICEF rather than an approach shared by many. Promoting ECD should also involve broader partnerships.

G. Summaries of mid-term reviews and major evaluations of country programmes

Introduction

257. The Director of the Evaluation Office said that, overall, the quality of reporting on evaluations had improved in the last year, and the reports contained a more candid analysis of UNICEF performance. A recent meta-evaluation of the quality of UNICEF-supported evaluation revealed the need to strengthen evaluation at the country level. The focus over the next two years would be on strengthening evaluations supported by country offices, the related services provided by regional offices and the evaluation capacities of national partners.

258. Many delegations recognized that the overall quality of evaluations and UNICEF capacities in this area had improved. There was a wide consensus on the need to improve the quality, relevance, analysis and usefulness of studies and evaluations, with several delegations recommending that fewer be conducted. The secretariat explained that in general, major studies and evaluations identified and managed through the normal planning processes were of good quality. However, the quality of ad hoc evaluations, undertaken at the request of donors or for specific purposes or meetings, was more difficult to control.

259. Several delegations commented positively on the regional analyses of evaluation quality and on improvements in evaluation capacity and quality. Asked about the potential for more multi-country evaluations, the secretariat explained that good candidates were being identified. Several delegations suggested that lessons learned could be better systematized, noting specific places that could benefit from lessons shared. Other delegations said that UNICEF should improve its focus on results, even given the organization's greater advocacy and policy functions. Speakers stressed the need to have good baseline data and to develop

monitoring and evaluation systems before a project began, preferably as part of a systematic IMEP. It was also suggested that the findings of the different regional reports be presented in a more harmonized way. UNICEF was asked to elaborate on the cooperation and the contribution of partners. While some reports mentioned UNDAFs, they could elaborate more on this process and on cooperation with United Nations country teams.

Eastern and Southern Africa

260. The Regional Director introduced the report for the region (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.27). Some speakers congratulated UNICEF on the impressive outcomes of the MTRs and evaluations, particularly in HIV/AIDS, protection of children, including orphans, children in conflict with the law, and working and street children. Speakers sought clarifications on the extent of national ownership of UNICEF-assisted programmes vis-à-vis: application of human rights approaches, effective participation of donors in MTRs, the satisfaction of counterparts and partners with MTR processes, and the consistent application of results-based programming principles, including use of baseline data for planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. The Regional Director explained that UNICEF efforts over the last five years to promote human rights approaches, including the training of over 300 programme staff in country offices, had contributed immensely to strengthening national ownership of programmes. Strengthening the skills of national counterparts in human rights-based programming had led to better identification of duty bearers' roles and responsibilities and a resulting commitment to action at the subnational level. These efforts needed to be linked to national institutional reforms.

261. Donors had a standing invitation to take part in MTRs. UNICEF briefed donors on situation analyses and welcomed their participation in those processes. Although the improved MTRs had resulted in more effective mid-course adjustments to country programmes, counterparts said the MTR process should be simpler and more focused.

262. On the **MTRs for Uganda and Rwanda**, one delegation asked about the extent of alignment of the UNICEF country programmes with national planning instruments such as the PRSP in Rwanda and the Poverty Eradication Action Plan in Uganda. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF participated very actively in PRSPs and SWAps and had just completed an evaluation of its participation in health SWAps in four countries.

263. On the **evaluation of the complementary basic education programme (COBET) in the United Republic of Tanzania**, a delegation said that COBET had achieved its objective of improving national education policies and facilitating national replication but questioned whether UNICEF funding of COBET might lead to support for a parallel schooling system. The Regional Director said that COBET was guided by the national education programme, whose curricula had assimilated many of its elements.

264. One delegate said that the **evaluation of the peer education programme in Zambia** did not show an improved methodology, as baseline data were not mentioned and planning seemed to have been weak, with programme implementation hindered by a lack of commodities and supplies. The Regional Director agreed, saying that despite progress made in using baseline data and results-based programming, UNICEF capacity in these areas still needed improvement.

265. In conclusion, the Executive Director said the dire situation of children and women in Northern Uganda represented one of the most forgotten emergencies in the world. As in Darfur, many people were displaced and children abducted. Up to 35,000 children were forced to seek safety away from home every night. The donor community in Uganda had a positive approach to financing in relation to the Poverty Eradication Plan, direct budget support and decentralized funding, which are generally working well, except in some parts of the North. Unfortunately, much of humanitarian response in the North was undertaken by the international community, while the government funding for critical areas such as education and health was decentralized and often unused when people had left the various districts.

West and Central Africa

266. The Regional Director presented the regional report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.28).

267. Speaking on the **Burkina Faso MTR**, the delegation of that country said that the rate of HIV infection had decreased from 7 per cent in 1997 to 4 per cent in 2003. Overall school attendance, especially among young girls, had increased from 42 per cent in 2001 to 48 per cent in 2003. Access to quality health care, including improved vaccination, was available to 65 per cent of the population. Government action had contributed to the effective control of child trafficking. Another speaker said that the MTR's important findings on progress made in child trafficking should inform the design of new projects. Information was requested on coordination with other agencies such as ILO and the International Organization for Migration. A speaker expressed appreciation for the use of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in designing the next programme.

268. On the **MTR of the Chad country programme**, a delegation said that there was a need to ensure greater access to non-formal education before pursuing large-scale education programmes. The speaker also asked whether the recommendation concerning emergencies in paragraph 29 referred to Darfur. The Regional Director expressed appreciation for the effective support provided by the military of the country in distributing supplies to inaccessible regions of Chad. Concerning Darfur, she explained that at the time of the report the situation was not as acute, but that subsequently a 90-day plan had been developed to address the emergency in eastern Chad, where UNICEF was strengthening its field presence. UNICEF used education and schools in camps as an entry point for measles vaccination and nutrition activities, and HIV/AIDS and water and sanitation were being addressed. The eventual expansion of formal education would build on the experiences with community participation in non-formal education.

269. The representative of Ghana, speaking about the **Ghana MTR**, expressed appreciation for UNICEF work in increasing awareness about child rights. Despite progress on health, challenges persisted, such as the new outbreak of polio in the subregion. The speaker hoped that the Accelerated Child Development and Survival Strategy being implemented in several parts of the country would be expanded. Infant mortality continued to be a problem, largely due to malaria, malnutrition and stalled efforts to eradicate dracunculiasis. Another delegation expressed appreciation for UNICEF efforts in education, especially for girls, child protection and the fight against trafficking. Nevertheless, concerns remained about continuing high levels of malnutrition.

Americas and the Caribbean

270. The regional report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.29) was presented by the Regional Director. A number of delegations praised the MTRs for being inclusive and frank, accurately reflecting the situations described and helping to reorient national focus. The PRSP process was highlighted as an opportunity to influence government policy. UNICEF was asked to intensify its technical assistance and further orient its programmes towards achieving results and the Millennium Development Goals.

271. Delegations praised the role and impact of UNICEF work throughout the region, which was in line with government and donor policies. National NGOs had been strengthened through UNICEF efforts to systematize programme experiences. Several delegations noted the excellent relations UNICEF maintains with national counterparts and suggested the organization improve coordination with other agencies.

272. UNICEF work with minorities was cited as being effective, but because of difficulties encountered in reaching remote communities it was important to track costs. Several delegations from the region expressed concern about the decrease in resources for country programmes and the region as a whole. To concerns expressed about the rise of HIV/AIDS, the Regional Director said there was strong political will to fight the disease. Several delegations said that UNICEF was on the right track in addressing early child development and health, while respecting cultural differences, and in supporting the family unit. It was important that this took place within a rights-based approach.

273. Commenting on the **MTR of the Peru country programme,** the delegation of that country said that UNICEF was a fundamental partner to the Government. The Government's political will to promote the rights of women and children was reflected in the National Action Plan for Children 2002-2010 (*Plan Nacional de Acción por la Infancia y la Adolescencia*). Regarding HIV/AIDS, efforts were being made to bring treatment costs down. The country wanted to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, but concerns remained about decreasing resources for the region.

East Asia and the Pacific

274. The regional report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.30) was introduced by the Deputy Regional Director.

275. Referring to the **Cambodia MTR and the evaluation of the *Seth Koma* community action programme,** a speaker was pleased that *Seth Koma* was working with commune councils to improve basic services but lamented the lack of reliable data and of systematic monitoring mechanisms in Cambodia, which affected the UNICEF programme. UNICEF was asked: (a) whether an overall plan had been created with the Government to integrate global fund resources into development plans that could benefit the entire health system; and (b) whether steps had been taken to improve the use of funding for health and education. The Deputy Regional Director replied that work was being done with the commune councils, as part of the *Seth Koma* programme, enabling better collection and use of data.

276. Speaking on the **China MTR**, the delegation of that country expressed appreciation for the excellent cooperation with UNICEF. While conditions in China were helping to guarantee the survival, development, protection and participation of children, socio-economic and urban/rural development was uneven and tremendous challenges remained. The country programme for 2006-2010 would focus on maternal mortality, child survival, IECD, HIV/AIDS, and protection issues, using the rights-based approach. Another delegation urged that programmes in China focus on underserved regions and address the lack of emergency obstetric care as well as malnutrition and HIV/AIDS in some high-risk groups. The Deputy Regional Director agreed that inequalities persisted and said UNICEF cooperation was oriented towards the Western and other underserved parts of the country. Asked why injuries had become the leading cause of child deaths and what was the programmatic response, he said that the success in lowering mortality from communicable diseases had made injuries the leading cause of under-five mortality, and countries were sharing experiences on this issue. Responding to a query on arsenic mitigation, he said that UNICEF collaborated closely with WHO on this issue. The Executive Director added that in China, which she had just visited, UNICEF and the Government were building on the MTR to discuss the nature of the next country programme, which would focus on the areas with the greatest disparities. These areas included the Western Region, as part of the Government's Western Region Initiative, and specifically one of the provinces that she had visited, Tibet.

277. Referring to the **MTR for Myanmar**, where high levels of immunization had been reached in accessible areas, one delegation asked for more information on how inaccessible areas could be reached. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the support given to HIV/AIDS control in Myanmar but questioned the value of single-goal campaigns, which were costly and contributed little to capacity-building. She inquired how HIV/AIDS work contributed to capacity-building, especially in programme planning, management and implementation. The Deputy Regional Director replied that internal conflict hindered access in some areas but that access was improving, and the United Nations country team was working with both state and non-state partners on this. UNICEF assistance reached the majority of the population in accessible areas and reached more areas of the country than other agencies did. UNICEF used both single-issue and broad campaigns, e.g., the area-focused township approach, which dealt with issues holistically at the local level.

278. Referring to the **Viet Nam MTR**, a delegation inquired whether lessons learned from childhood injury prevention were being shared with neighbouring countries, specifically China, and recommended that UNICEF involve more local NGOs in implementing and scaling-up programmes. The delegation appreciated the fact that strengthening the family was an MTR priority. The Deputy Regional Director replied that UNICEF worked closely with local NGOs. He mentioned that Australia and Viet Nam had convened a major meeting on the family in May 2004, and the next consultation on the family would convene in Singapore in 2006.

279. Regarding the **Indonesia MTR**, one speaker delegation praised progress made despite low funding and issues related to decentralization. To comments about the results matrix and the inclusion of indicators on child and maternal health and education, the Deputy Regional Director replied that efforts were made to produce a quality results matrix for the new CPD.

280. Asked for information on UNICEF coordination and harmonization with other agencies and donors, the Deputy Regional Director said that inter-agency coordination was taken very seriously. This year, for example, UNICEF was the lead agency in the Asia and Pacific region to provide quality support to CCAs and UNDAFs, with UNDP to take over the lead next year.

281. To a question about HIV/AIDS, he said that UNICEF worked with Governments through ministerial consultations, with other co-sponsors of UNAIDS and with donors. HIV prevention was a priority, and more attention was being paid to OVC and the care and support given to children and families living with HIV/AIDS. UNICEF supported the religious leadership initiative in Thailand and other countries.

South Asia

282. The Regional Director presented the report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.31).

283. On the **Nepal MTR**, the representative of Nepal stated that the Decentralized Action for Children and Women programme was very successful, in spite of the violence in the country. Expansion beyond the 15 original districts was essential for strengthening the UNICEF programme, for sustaining results, and for ensuring continuity.

284. Regarding the **Bangladesh MTR**, the representative of Bangladesh said that the Intensive Education for All programme was a remarkably successful approach that had become part of the Government's Primary Education Development Project. In health and nutrition, Bangladesh had made considerable progress, especially in immunization, particularly against polio, and increased coverage for Vitamin A supplementation. In emergency obstetric care services, deprived and remote areas were now especially targeted, and a new programme had been launched to reduce maternal mortality by 75 per cent. Although HIV/AIDS prevalence was very low, a National AIDS Committee had been formed to address the threat. The speaker suggested that attention paid to advocacy and communication not overshadow other priority areas and praised UNICEF for its strong support for arsenic mitigation.

285. On the **evaluation of the child's environment programme in India**, a delegation pointed to Government efforts in providing drinking water supply and sanitation, which included financial and technical assistance. Although significant achievements were made in providing drinking water, rural sanitation coverage continued to be a challenge. A new Government initiative had been launched throughout the country to benefit people at the village and district levels.

286. Speaking on the regional **evaluation of the "Meena" Communication Initiative**, a delegation stated that "Meena" had played a remarkable role in building awareness of health care, gender parity and child rights. Another speaker suggested that UNICEF work with the Governments in supporting interpersonal communication through local communication networks being developed.

287. To comments about links with the UNDAF and United Nations country teams, the Regional Director replied that in South Asia UNICEF was very active in United Nations reform, especially the CCA/UNDAF process, PRSPs and SWAps. In Bangladesh, Nepal and

Sri Lanka, UNICEF led the theme groups on HIV/AIDS. This year, UNICEF led the UNDG Executive Committee Regional Group on United Nations Reform in South Asia for which it had prepared consolidated comments on the Bangladesh CCA.

Middle East and North Africa

288. The report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.33) was introduced by the Regional Director. Delegations commended UNICEF for the quality of reporting and close cooperation with Governments and donors. Others praised UNICEF for its involvement in post-conflict situations and countries in transition, for its evolving role in the region and for its effective work at the regional and community levels. One delegation expressed appreciation for the way UNICEF country offices dealt with the effect of the war on children, particularly those in Iraq and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and congratulated UNICEF on its timely Watching Briefs for Iraq.

289. Referring to an **evaluation of psychosocial care of children affected by terrorist violence** that broke out in the 1970s, the representative of Algeria said that the Government was doing everything possible to help these children. Referring to the **evaluation on pre-school education**, he clarified that this was a priority for the Government, though it was not financed by the State. The Regional Director replied that most countries found it difficult to finance pre-schools and control their quality. UNICEF was working with Governments on improving both public and private programmes in this area. Another delegate, referring to the studies on psychosocial care for the children of Algeria and on the **victims of sexual exploitation in Marrakech, Morocco,** stressed the importance of psychosocial care for traumatized children and suggested that lessons learned be shared among regions. The Regional Director said that Algeria's trauma specialists were a resource for the region and beyond. The Algeria programme was begun with the assistance of the UNICEF trauma specialist in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this was one of many examples of lessons shared.

290. Two speakers said they appreciated the inclusion of children of the Occupied Palestinian Territory in the studies and evaluations. The Observer for Palestine expressed satisfaction with the **survey on Palestinian children's nutritional status**, which had suffered as a result of the closures, curfews and siege, as noted in the report. Responding to questions about the lack of concrete recommendations for budgeting and implementation in the study, the Regional Director replied that the study recommended strengthening prevention and detection systems and highlighted an important connection between nutrition problems and isolated communities. UNICEF was working with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, WHO and Ministries to target those communities. The escalation of poverty might provoke further nutrition emergencies, especially in Gaza, and an additional nutritional survey was planned for this year.

291. The representative of Lebanon, referring to the **study on girls' education** in his country as part of **gender reviews in Lebanon, Morocco and Sudan**, said that Lebanon was a pioneer in the region in encouraging girls' education, and thanked UNICEF for its technical assistance in that area. Referring to these gender reviews, a delegation suggested that studies go beyond desk reviews, expressed concern that the conclusions might not be validated in future research, and stressed the need for further studies. The Regional Director said that the

gender-in-education surveys were a good starting point. The aim was to include a range of countries, and he hoped at least 10 more countries would volunteer to participate this year.

292. With respect to the **survey on violence against children of primary-school age in the Syrian Arab Republic**, the country representative said the issue was of primary importance to the Government, which passed a law in 2003 outlawing corporal punishment in schools. She said the problem was overestimated in the study, which had several technical inadequacies, and requested further study on the issue. The Regional Director acknowledged the weakness of the study and said he would take note of the comments but emphasized that violence against children at school or at home remained an important issue in many countries. Beyond the passing of laws, the problem demanded action that included training, setting of standards and advocacy. The regional office planned to conduct studies on the issue in other countries this year.

293. Regarding the **study on attitudes and values relating to female genital mutilation (FGM)**, the representative of Egypt declared FGM a priority in his country and said that the report did not reflect the great strides made to eradicate the practice. An extensive media campaign against FGM was under way, and in 2003 a conference on legal tools and FGM had been convened by the First Lady. The Regional Director noted the impressive work done by the First Lady and the media, and congratulated Egypt for its outstanding progress.

294. In response to the concern expressed by one delegation over the disturbing findings on the **situation of maternal health in Yemen,** the Regional Director said a scarcity of supplies and equipment for maternal and child health, along with a lack of trained personnel, was a problem in many countries. He praised the Government for its identification of the problem and quick response in redirecting funds.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

295. The Regional Director offered her condolences to the delegation of the Russian Federation and to the Russian people on the tragic events in Beslan. The representative of the Russian Federation thanked the Regional Director, and commended the active work of UNICEF in determining the country's needs in child protection.

296. The report (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.32) was introduced by the Regional Director. Speakers mentioned the unique ability of UNICEF to advocate at high political levels for improving the well-being of, and increasing investment in, women and children. Others noted the growing problems of HIV/AIDS, child abandonment and declining economic conditions and requested more investment in the region. The Regional Director agreed that all countries were challenged by increasing child poverty and that investment needed to increase. A follow-up meeting to the Sarajevo Conference would look at the issue.

297. Concerning the **MTR of the Albania country programme**, a speaker was pleased with the improved health status of children in that country, but said specific data were needed. Also, the current programme did not discuss plans to address HIV/AIDS. The Regional Director responded that UNICEF was focusing on the introduction of life skills-based education made possible by the assistance of CIDA, the Government of Ireland, the

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and USAID. UNICEF was also targeting young people in schools and through media and participatory programmes. The development of a national plan was an important step in bringing cohesion and consistency to HIV/AIDS prevention.

298. On the **Georgia MTR**, a speaker commended the progress made by the country programme and agreed with the decision to focus on priority areas. UNICEF was requested to share its revised programme plan that would included the expanded UNICEF role in conflict areas.

299. The representative of Turkey, speaking about the **MTR of the Turkey country programme**, confirmed his Government's continued cooperation with UNICEF and other United Nations bodies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Another delegation supported UNICEF work with the Government in building capacity in psychological trauma intervention and suggested that lessons learned be shared. The Regional Director said that that the psychosocial support in Turkey was based on experience gained in that area during the Gujarat earthquake in India a few years ago, and that more should be done to compile and disseminate such experiences.

300. Referring to the evaluation of measures for **prevention of child abandonment in maternity hospitals in Romania,** some speakers referred to the increasing number of abandoned children in their countries and suggested that in Romania more analysis take place on the reasons for abandonment and the consequences for children. One delegation suggested that training medical staff in techniques to nurture the mother-child bond was an effective response. The Regional Director replied that counselling services were useful in providing support to mothers and infants but did not reduce the number of abandoned children. Instead, as the evaluation pointed out, a number of areas that must be addressed to prevent this complex problem. A follow-up study would be conducted in the coming months and a report made available by February 2005.

301. Other delegates identified more with the experience of **rights-based education for tolerance and peace in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**. One speaker suggested that this type of work should be at the forefront of UNICEF activities, particularly in countries with multiethnic populations. Another delegation recommended sharing lessons learned with other countries. The Regional Director said that the strength of the study was its baseline data that allowed monitoring, follow up and documentation of the results. UNICEF planned to work with the Ministry of Education to expand the sampling data to more schools in order to develop and implement new strategies.

H. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

Draft country programme document for Guatemala

302. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPD for Guatemala (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.25), which was introduced by the Regional Director. The representative of Guatemala said that the proposed country programme was consistent with the revised UNDAF and was the first to be synchronized with the cycles of other United Nations agencies. The change of approach to the country programme, which began in 2002 and was

inspired by the law of 2003 on the protection of children and adolescents, aimed to support public institutions and civil society in the promotion, defence and exercise of the rights of children and young people. He expressed concern about the insufficient resources allocated to the programme, as UNICEF resources had been a catalyst for raising other funds. The Regional Director responded that UNICEF had challenged the Guatemalan Parliament to allocate more resources, and that they had committed to do so.

303. Several delegations praised the CPD for its alignment with the country's needs and priorities and with the MTSP, the Millennium Development Goals and the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Several delegations said they were pleased to see the CPD highlight the role of the family as the foundation for the protection and development of the child.

304. Speakers expressed concern about issues of inter-agency collaboration; the departure of MINUGUA; the need for UNICEF to reinforce collaboration with United Nations and other agencies, such as the Inter-American Development Bank; the fact that the CPD should more clearly reflect the United Nations coordination process, including the UNDAF, as well as cooperation among donors; and the need for UNICEF to better to contribute to SWAps, especially in education.

305. Other delegations said that UNICEF could play a vital role in influencing government decision-making, especially on social spending, which was well below the Latin American average. One delegation welcomed the increased work of UNICEF with national and local government institutions to improve national ownership and sustainability of programmes. UNICEF was commended for its coordination with donor countries and its good networking with counterparts and civil society, particularly NGOs, on issues of education and exclusion. However, UNICEF should improve collaboration with the Government to address education gaps and school drop-outs, which were particularly prevalent among rural schools and indigenous children. The bilingual education and intercultural programmes supported by UNICEF were deemed very important, especially for rural and indigenous girls. One speaker commented that the priority of focusing on young marginal populations should be better reflected in the document.

306. One speaker said the document's data, especially on HIV/AIDS, were not the most recent. She also asked why UNICEF did not support the Government's community-based growth promotion programme, which could significantly improve nutrition indicators. Moreover, the country programme eschewed the "frontline work" of UNICEF, which had been so successful in the past and the shift to a rights-based approach could adversely affect public health interventions. It was recommended that the CPD be revised to: (a) strengthen the link between national challenges and the MTSP; (b) increase the focus on health issues and public health interventions; and (c) more clearly delineate strategies to address basic health care and education. However, several delegations expressed their satisfaction with the rights-based approach. More information was needed on the advocacy strategy and the national counterparts involved.

307. The representative of Guatemala said that his Government endorsed UNICEF efforts to strengthen the rights-based approach in addition to providing services, as the two objectives are complementary. Raising awareness about rights was essential to strengthening

local institutions and making authorities more responsive in providing social services. He clarified the fact that the UNDAF was delayed because the original agreement had been made with the outgoing Government, and the new Government wanted to ensure that its priorities were reflected in the framework.

308. The Regional Director responded that strengthening public policy and social investment was one of the four pillars of UNICEF work in Guatemala and in the region, along with reducing violence, addressing exclusion and preventing HIV/AIDS. These regional priorities had been approved by the Executive Board when it adopted the MTSP. Moreover, advocacy for greater and more efficient social investment helped to fulfil the MTSP, including its child survival and maternal mortality goals. Influencing public policy went together with improving the efficiency of programmes, and improving accountability at all levels was a priority. In the revised CPD, UNICEF would strengthen the links between challenges in health and education and the UNICEF response. As for growth monitoring, chronic malnutrition was an increasing problem requiring a consistent, multisectoral effort. UNICEF was involved in some programmes but more resources were needed for malnutrition and other public health areas.

309. The Executive Board approved the aggregate indicative budget of the draft CPD (see annex, decision 2004/10).

Recommendations for additional resources for approved country programmes

310. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation prepared by the secretariat (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.25) which was introduced by the Director, Programme Division, and approved without comment (decision 2004/11).

Recommendations to increase the other resources ceilings for approved country programmes

311. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation prepared by the secretariat (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.26) which was introduced by the Director, Programme Division, and approved without comment (decision 2004/12).

I. Update on developments in human resources

312. The report (E/ICEF/2004/17) was presented by the Executive Director. Delegations expressed support for the positive developments in human resources management, with some speakers noting that they were good examples for other United Nations agencies. Others said that UNICEF should continue efforts to improve staff security, as well as the balance between international Professional staff from donor and programme countries, and between men and women at the senior managerial level. Achieving gender parity and diversity in UNICEF could be accelerated through the filling of new posts via the succession management process. Several speakers referred to the presentation by the Chairperson of the UNICEF GSA to the Executive Board in June, and called for consideration of establishing an ombudsperson's office within UNICEF.

313. The Executive Director said that human resources development was a work in progress and UNICEF would move forward on this, with the continued support of the Board. She added that she was considering options for strengthening the ombudsperson system and would take action in due course.

314. The Executive Board took note of the report.

J. Medium-term strategic plan: financial plan and related recommendation for the period 2004-2007

315. The Executive Board had before it the medium-term financial plan for the period 2004-2007, which was introduced by the Comptroller. Overall, delegations supported the sound conservative approach of UNICEF to financial planning. One speaker explicitly called upon donors to increase their contributions to UNICEF, especially regular resources.

316. Referring to the dramatic increase in resources allocated by donors to peacekeeping, a delegation said that it was important to monitor the possible implications for humanitarian operations. The Executive Director agreed that this should be done in the appropriate forums in order to avoid duplication of efforts and suboptimal use of resources.

317. Another delegation asked about projected income and expenditures and the need to ensure that expenditures matched resources. The Comptroller replied that UNICEF tracked this very closely. UNICEF continuously reviewed income generation against the financial plan and made timely adjustments to expenditures.

318. To a comment that the projected increases for other resources might not be realistic, given their historic double-digit growth trends, especially for emergencies, the Comptroller said that the secretariat monitored very closely factors that affected the growth in resources.

319. See annex, decision 2004/14 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

K. The UNICEF recovery policy: an update

320. The Executive Board had before it the report on the update of the UNICEF recovery policy (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.5), which was introduced by the Comptroller.

321. Speakers welcomed the continued work of UNICEF on harmonization of the recovery policy with other United Nations agencies, and requested that a report on this work be presented at the second regular session of 2005. Additional information was also requested on thematic funding and the impact of the recovery policy on regular resources.

322. The Comptroller confirmed that UNICEF would report to the Board on those issues, as agreed at the second regular session of 2003. He said that there was a slow but growing donor support for thematic funding, with UNICEF having received $64 million under this category as of June 2004. Since the UNICEF recovery rates were fixed by the Executive Board and therefore not open to negotiation, he requested understanding from donor countries that were able to negotiate recovery rates with other United Nations agencies. Work was proceeding on greater harmonization of methodology and approach among agencies.

323. See annex, decision 2004/15 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

L. Report on internal audit activities in 2003

324. The report on internal audit activities in 2003 (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.8) was introduced by the Director, Office of Internal Audit (OIA). Delegations commented on the transparency of the report and the positive relationship between OIA oversight activities and UNICEF management's actions to address identified weaknesses. Several speakers expressed appreciation for the OIA audit methodology and risk-assessment approach to identify priority locations for audit. One delegation said that the audit findings corresponded well with the impressions of staff in individual field offices, as reported by its embassies. Several delegations stated their appreciation for OIA's better monitoring of the status of audit recommendations and for the way UNICEF management addressed the recommendations. Several delegations noted the increase in the number of country offices with satisfactory ratings in basic programme management over the previous year, and the advances made in introducing guidance for supply planning and field monitoring activities.

325. A number of delegations were concerned that so many country offices audited in 2003 had unsatisfactory ratings in finance and accounts, and supply assistance. While guidance had been issued to improve monitoring and evaluation, actual field office practices were deemed unsatisfactory in a higher-than-expected number of country offices. The Executive Director said that sustained actions were being taken to strengthen operational and programme management performance in field offices, but that they took time to implement. In the past 10 years, UNICEF had devoted much attention to improving field office operations, including through the recruitment of operations officers and the refining of their role and responsibilities. UNICEF was also strengthening the skills and practices of field office representatives in the management of operational issues.

326. One delegation asked why only 33 of 39 audits planned for 2003 were completed, and why the shortfall generally concerned headquarters audits and summary reports. The Director explained that because of the field-based nature of UNICEF, audits focused on field offices. In addition, two of the planned headquarters audits had started in 2003 and not been completed until 2004. Technical challenges had hindered implementation of some headquarters audits, and OIA would increase resources to support these audits.

327. The Executive Board took note of the report

M. Private Sector Division financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 2003

328. The Director, PSD, presented the report (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.9). Delegations commended UNICEF for the record results and the important role played by the private sector, National Committees and thousands of volunteers. Asked about the continued stagnation in the volume of card and gift sales, the Director said that PSD created a new team in product development to improve cost-effective innovation in this area, and a pilot e-greetings project was launched in the 2004 winter card campaign. He described efforts focusing on private sector fund-raising, which generated the bulk of private sector income, and on investment in pledge donors.

329. The Executive Board took note of the report.

N. Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

330. The Executive Board had before it the report to the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.7), which was introduced by the Comptroller. Asked about the UNICEF guidelines on contributions in kind, he said that they had been issued. The Executive Board then took note of the report.

O. Guidelines for Executive Board field visits

331. The Executive Board had before it a report (E/ICEF/2004/19), which was presented by the Secretary of the Executive Board. Speaking on behalf of the African members of the Board, a delegation said that consideration should be given to having one visit per year take place in Africa. She also suggested that participants be given detailed briefings prior to their departure. Another speaker made several recommendations, including: that each regional group have only one representative per trip, that the potential host countries be consulted prior to selection, and that all relevant international conventions regarding diplomatic privileges be respected. The secretariat replied that the trips were planned in full consultation with host Governments and that all usual diplomatic privileges applied to the field trips. It was suggested by other delegations that the field visits also examine the level of governance concerning child and family issues, and that the report of the joint field visit be placed on the agenda of the annual joint meeting of the Executive Boards.

332. The President stressed that the report was a consensus document prepared in full consultation with all the Vice-Presidents. The Board approved the guidelines in decision 2004/13 (see annex).

P. Executive Board programme of work for 2005

333. The Executive Board had before it the draft programme of work for 2005 (E/ICEF/2004/18), which was introduced by the Secretary of the Executive Board. A number of delegations requested that certain items be added to the agendas of the various sessions, and the Board agreed. In addition, a delegation asked if the date for the second regular session in 2005 could be changed to accommodate the ensuing session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, which would be meeting during the first week of the General Assembly session. The secretariat replied that the dates had been fixed with Conference Services and it would not be possible to change them. (See annex, decision 2004/17 for the final programme of work adopted by the Executive Board.)

Q. Other matters

Tribute to Karin Sham Poo

334. Several speakers paid tribute to Deputy Executive Director Karin Sham Poo, who was retiring from UNICEF at the end of the year, and commended her for her great contribution

to UNICEF throughout the years. The Executive Director praised Ms. Sham Poo for her knowledge, “strength, stability and clear thinking” in her many years of service to UNICEF.

335. Ms. Sham Poo spoke briefly about the continuity of the UNICEF mandate and the many changes that had taken place since she attended her first Board meeting in 1986. Among the changes were the spread of HIV/AIDS and the surge in the growth of the contribution of the National Committees to private-sector fundraising and UNICEF income.

R. Closing statements

336. The Executive Director expressed her appreciation for the broad participation of the Board members, which would help UNICEF to shape a vision for the future. All comments and concerns would be shared with UNICEF headquarters and field offices.

337. The President said that the session had been marked by interactive discussions on nearly every agenda item. The President said that this was his last Board session as President, and he acknowledged all those who had contributed to making the Board sessions productive, especially the members of the Bureau.

Annex

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2004

2004/1. Discontinuation of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

The Executive Board

Takes note of the reports on the evaluation of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) (E/ICEF/2004/6 and WHO EBPDC10/5) and *endorses* the recommendation contained therein, namely, that in the light of alternative collaborative arrangements that have been developed since its establishment in 1997, and the balance of costs and achievements, the CCH should be discontinued. The Board *recommends* that the secretariats of the three organizations continue to strengthen coordination among themselves in the area of health.

First regular session
21 January 2004

2004/2. Private Sector Division work plan and proposed budget for 2004

A. Private Sector Division budgeted expenditures for the 2004 season

The Executive Board

1. Approves for the fiscal year 1 January to 31 December 2004 budgeted expenditures of $89.0 million as detailed below and summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1:

	(In millions of United States dollars)
Commissions – field offices	1.2
Cost of goods delivered	30.5
Marketing expenditures	22.3
Support services	18.6
Investment funds	16.4
Total expenditures, consolidated	89.0

2. *Authorizes* the Executive Director:

(a) To incur expenditures as summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1 and to increase expenditures up to the level indicated in column III of the same table should the apparent proceeds from card and gift sales and/or private sector fund-raising increase to the levels indicated in column III, and accordingly, to reduce expenditures below the level indicated in column II to the extent necessary, should the net proceeds decrease;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above) up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2004 approved work plan.

B. Budgeted income for the 2004 season

The Executive Board

Notes that for the period 1 January to 31 December 2004, PSD net proceeds are budgeted at $333.0 million (regular resources) as shown in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1.

C. Policy issues

The Executive Board

1. *Renews* investment funds with $16.4 million established for 2004;

2. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to incur expenditures in the 2004 fiscal period related to the cost of goods delivered (production/purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 2005 fiscal year up to $31.0 million as indicated in the PSD medium-term plan (see table 6 of document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1).

D. Medium-term plan

The Executive Board

Approves the PSD medium-term plan as reflected in table 6 to document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.1.

First regular session
21 January 2004

2004/3. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note of* the "Report of the Executive Director: Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/2004/3-E/ICEF/2004/4), and requests the secretariat to transmit it, along with a summary of the comments made during the discussions at the first regular session of the Executive Board for 2004, to the Economic and Social Council;

2. *Attaches* great importance to the upcoming triennial comprehensive policy review, and to its contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and follow-up to the General Assembly Special Session on Children;

3. *Encourages* UNICEF to participate actively in supporting that process, *inter alia* by sharing all relevant evaluative and other material with the United Nations Secretariat.

First regular session
22 January 2004

2004/4. Working methods of the Executive Board

The Executive Board,

Recalling its decision 2003/14 requesting the Bureau to explore approaches to further improving working methods and to report its finding,

1. *Takes note* of the oral report by the Secretary of the Executive Board and acknowledges the positive work done to date;

2. *Requests* the Bureau to continue its leading role on this issue, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the current session, with a view to further enhancing the ability of the Board to discharge its duties and to provide strategic guidance;

3. *Further requests* the Bureau to submit specific recommendations for discussion at the Board's annual session in 2004, including the issues of:

(a) the timely submission, presentation and analytical content of documents, including draft decisions;

(b) the Executive Board's work planning process;

(c) the use and timing of informal briefings.

First regular session
22 January 2004

No decision 2004/5 issued due to technical error.

2004/6. Draft country programme documents

The Executive Board

(a) *Approves* the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country programmes of cooperation:

Region/country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2004/*
Eastern and Southern Africa				
Angola	2005-2008	22 584 000	68 000 000	P/L.1
Burundi	2005-2007	10 908 000	27 000 000	P/L.2
Madagascar	2005-2009	25 710 000	42 000 000	P/L.3
Zimbabwe	2005-2006	3 850 000	14 000 000	P/L.4
West and Central Africa				
Cape Verde	2005	611 000	450 000	P/L.5
Americas and Caribbean				
Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay)	2005-2009	5 900 000	18 800 000	P/L.6
East Asia and the Pacific				
Malaysia	2005-2007	1 500 000	1 500 000	P/L.8
Philippines	2005-2009	11 570 000	32 000 000	P/L.9
CEE, CIS and Baltic States				
Armenia	2005-2009	3 405 000	3 569 000	P/L.10
Azerbaijan	2005-2009	4 760 000	4 700 000	P/L.11
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2005-2008	2 468 000	13 000 000	P/L.12
Kazakhstan	2005-2009	4 920 000	2 216 000	P/L.13
Kyrgyzstan	2005-2010	5 562 000	3 000 000	P/L.14
Romania	2005-2009	3 385 000	11 615 000	P/L.15
Serbia and Montenegro	2005-2009	3 325 000	36 500 000	P/L.16
Tajikistan	2005-2009	6 405 000	20 000 000	P/L.17
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2005-2009	3 060 000	10 000 000	P/L.18
Turkmenistan	2005-2009	4 680 000	1 300 000	P/L.19
Uzbekistan	2005-2009	9 260 000	8 560 000	P/L.20
Middle East and North Africa				
Islamic Republic of Iran	2005-2009	7 880 000	5 500 000	P/L.21
Iraq	2005-2006	3 872 000	196 700 000	P/L.22

(b) *Approves* an increase in the other resources ceiling for the Iraq country programme for 2004 in the amount of $140,000,000 (E/ICEF/2004/P/L.23).

Annual session
8-9 June 2004

2004/7. Timing of the approval of the UNICEF biennial support budget

The Executive Board,

Affirming the principle that 'the plan drives the budget',

Agreeing that the biennial support budget should be formulated after the programme has been sufficiently articulated through the development of the draft country programme document for country offices, and the office management plans for headquarters and regional offices;

Decides that:

1. The biennial support budget for 2006-2007 will be reviewed at the first regular session in January 2006;

2. At the second regular session of 2005, an advance allocation will be approved for spending for the month of January 2006, based upon the previous year's expenditures for January.

Annual session
10 June 2004

2004/8. Joint programming

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on the assessment of the UNICEF experience of joint programming contained in document E/ICEF/2004/10;

2. *Decides* to defer the consideration of a decision to the first regular session in 2005.

Annual session
11 June 2004

2004/9. The UNICEF evaluation function

The Executive Board,

1. *Commends* UNICEF for the quality of the report on the evaluation function contained in document E/ICEF/2004/11, the important progress that it reflects, and its thoroughness in identifying areas for improvement and future challenges;

2. *Welcomes* the progress made to date by the evaluation function in responding to new demands, particularly the increased emphasis on the achievement of results of programmes involving UNICEF, in the context of United Nations operational activities and inter-agency work at the country level;

3. *Notes* that much work remains to be done, including sharpening the strategic focus of evaluation work plans, improving efficiency and raising the overall standards of evaluation work;

4. *Emphasizes* that the evaluation function should be carried out in consultation with national authorities and in compliance with decision 2002/9 (E/ICEF/2002/8/Rev.1);

5. Bearing in mind the above, *encourages* the further strengthening of the evaluation function in UNICEF, with particular emphasis being given to progress in the following areas:

(a) Improving the efficiency and strategic value of the evaluation function by focusing on fewer, high-quality studies, with a strong emphasis on analyzing effectiveness and results;

(b) Continuing to improve the standards of evaluation at the country level, with the guidance of national authorities and building on United Nations system-wide norms and standards for evaluation, with the technical support of the Evaluation Office and regional offices;

(c) Accelerating progress towards joint evaluation work with national authorities, United Nations system and other partners, including with respect to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

(d) Continuing and expanding work with national authorities and other partners, and the United Nations country teams, to strengthen national capacity for evaluation work;

(e) Identifying best practices from evaluations for achieving the targets and objectives of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), and ensuring that procedures are implemented to enable the findings from evaluations to be systematically fed into the organization to secure organizational learning;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to prepare a further report on the work of the evaluation function for consideration by the Executive Board at its annual session in 2006;

7. *Further requests* that key findings from evaluations of the thematic areas of the MTSP be presented and discussed at the Executive Board as and when these become available.

Annual session
11 June 2004

2004/10. Draft country programme document for Guatemala

The Executive Board

Approves the aggregate indicative budget for the following country programme of cooperation:

Country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2004/*
Guatemala	2005-2008	3 648 000	18 478 000	P/L24

Second regular session
15 September 2004

2004/11. Additional regular resources for approved country programmes

The Executive Board

Approves the allocations of additional regular resources contained in document E/ICEF/2004/P/L.25 as follows:

(In United States dollars)

Region/Country	*Balance of approved RR 2004* *(A)*	*RR planning level 2004* *(B)*	*Amount to be approved* *(B-A)*
Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States			
Kazakhstan	978 000	984 000	6 000
Kyrgyzstan	922 000	927 000	5 000
Tajikistan	1 264 766	1 281 000	16 234
Uzbekistan	1 841 000	1 852 000	11 000
Subtotal	**5 005 766**	**5 044 000**	**38 234**
East Asia and the Pacific			
Philippines	2 098 000	2 214 000	116 000
Subtotal	**2 098 000**	**2 214 000**	**116 000**
Eastern and Southern Africa			
Madagascar	4 099 000	4 630 000	531 000
Subtotal	**4 099 000**	**4 630 000**	**531 000**
Total	**11 202 766**	**11 888 000**	**685 234**

Second regular session
15 September 2004

2004/12. Increased other resources ceilings for approved country programmes

The Executive Board

(a) *Approves* the recommendation to increase the other resources ceilings for approved country programmes contained in E/ICEF/2004/P/L.26 and Add.1 as follows:

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Country programme	*Programme cycle*	*Approved OR ceiling*	*Additional OR to be approved*	*Total OR ceiling*
Dominican Republic	2002-2006	5 000	8 400	13 400
Cambodia	2001-2005	52 200	11 800	64 000
Sri Lanka	2002-2006	10 000	10 000	20 000
Malawi	2002-2006	35 120	17 000	52 120
Total		**102 300**	**47 200**	**149 520**

Second regular session
15 September 2004

2004/13. Guidelines for Executive Board field visits

The Executive Board,

Adopts the guidelines for field visits by members of the UNICEF Executive Board as described in document E/ICEF/2004/19.

Second regular session
15 September 2004

2004/14. Medium-term strategic plan: financial plan and related recommendation for the period 2004-2007

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the medium-term financial plan (E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.4) as a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes;

2. *Approves* the medium-term financial plan as a framework of projections for 2004-2007 (summarized in table 4 of document E/ICEF/2004/AB/L.4), including the preparation of up to $492 million in programme expenditures from regular resources to be submitted to the Executive Board in 2005. This amount is subject to the availability of resources and to the condition that estimates of income and expenditure made in this plan continue to be valid.

Second regular session
16 September 2004

2004/15. The UNICEF recovery policy

The Executive Board,

1. *Recalling* Executive Board decision 2003/9 (E/ICEF/2003/9/Rev.1) on the UNICEF recovery policy,

2. *Notes* the positive trend in recovering indirect costs attributed the management of other resources contributions;

3. *Appreciates* the progress made with other United Nations organizations to harmonize the recovery methodology;

4. *Encourages* UNICEF to continue active involvement in the working group of the High-Level Committee on Management on cost recovery;

5. *Decides* that the 4-per-cent reduction in the recovery rate for contributions over $40 million will be continued beyond 2004 so that a comprehensive proposal can be prepared for review by the Executive Board at the second regular session of 2005, taking into account the results of the discussions on harmonization and a review of the UNICEF experience in implementing decision 2003/9.

Second regular session
16 September 2004

2004/16. Report on the mid-term review of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (2002-2005)

The Executive Board,

1. *Welcomes* the report on the mid-term review of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (E/ICEF/2004/13) and commends the extensive consultations, performance analysis and evaluation work on which the review was based;

2. *Takes note of* the general conclusions of the review, including the implications identified for the preparation of the next plan, as well as the adjustments envisaged for the remaining period of the present medium-term strategic plan;

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on progress in effecting these adjustments as part of the next annual report on results achieved for children in support of the medium-term strategic plan, to be submitted to the Executive Board at its annual session in 2005;

4. *Requests* the Executive Director to reflect the Board's discussion of the review at the second regular session of 2004 in the formulation of a working draft of the next strategic plan, and to make the working draft available to members of the Executive Board in February 2005.

Second regular session
16 September 2004

2004/17. Programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2005

The Executive Board

A*dopts* the following programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2005:

First regular session (17-21 January)	• Election of officers of the UNICEF Executive Board for 2005 • Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (1995/5, 1998/1, 1999/6) • Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit of relevance to UNICEF (2001/4) • Approval of revised country programme documents (CPDs) (2002/4) • Oral report on girls' education • Oral report on immunization "plus" • Oral update on staff security • Joint programming (2004/8) • Report on accountabilities within UNICEF • Private Sector Division (PSD) work plan and proposed budget for 2005 • UNICEF financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium 2002-2003 (deferred from second regular session 2004) • Pledging event • Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNDP/UNFPA, with the participation of WFP
Annual session (6-10 June)	• Annual report of the Executive Director: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), including an update on emergencies • Review of draft MTSP for 2006-2009 • Progress report on implementation of decision 2002/4 on approval of country programmes • Draft CPDs (approx. 28) • Policy paper on UNICEF and post-conflict transition • Oral report on child protection • Oral report on HIV/AIDS • Presentation on maternal mortality • UNICEF Maurice Pate Leadership Award • Reports on field visits of Executive Board members (1992/32) • Statement by President of Global Staff Association

Second regular session (12-16 September)	• MTSP for 2006-2009, including medium-term financial plan • Decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council: oral report (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, para. 470) • Summaries of midterm reviews and major evaluations of country programmes (1995/8 and 2001/11) • Follow-up to UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board • Innocenti Research Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2006-2008 • Review of UNICEF recovery policy • Programme recommendations (additional resources for approved country programmes, other resources stand-alone, additional OR, etc.) • Advance support budget allocation for January 2006 (2004/7) • Interim financial statement for 2004, the first year of the biennium • PSD financial report and statements for the year ended 31 December 2004 • Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions • Report on internal audit activities in 2004 • Programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2006

Second regular session
16 September 2004